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A
"JOURNEY

THROUGHOUT

I R E L A N D //

DURING THE

SPRING, SUMMER, AND AUTUMN OF 1834.

BY

HENRY D. INGLIS/

AUTHOR OF "SPAIN IN 1830," "A JOURNEY THROUGH NORWAY,"

"A TOUR THROUGH FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, &c."

&c. &c.

FIFTH EDITION.

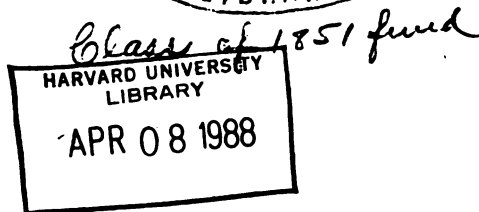
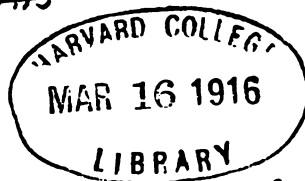
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TO
MATTHEW BARRINGTON, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is not, believe me, in the foolish vanity of supposing I *confer* a favour, that I dedicate these volumes to you : nor is it even meant, in some sort, as an acknowledgment of the many aids and kindnesses for which I stand your debtor : that debt would continue undiminished, if I were to dedicate to you fifty books,—better than any I either have written or ever shall write. I have better reasons than these, for my dedication.

Sitting over my coffee, devouring “ The last Days of Pompeii,” this note was handed to me :—

“ SIR, We only wait for the contents and dedication, in order to put the last sheet to press.”

The dedication ! Why, I never thought of a dedication : —“ let the *devil* wait,—and shut the door.”

No, said I,—laying down my pen, which I had hastily dipped in the ink,—and ringing the bell ; I’ll not do the thing in a hurry. There’s no occasion to wait ; I’ll send the dedication to-morrow.

This, said I,—drawing my great chair in front of the fire, and placing my slippered feet on the fender,—this is not a thing which ought to be done hastily : a book need not, indeed, have a dedication at all ; but if there be a dedication, it ought to be a judicious one.

* * * * *

My book, said I, musingly, and gently tapping the fire,—is a truth-telling book,—it is no party book,—and, God knows

—(while a thousand images of appalling misery, and hopeless poverty,—not poetical fancies, but stern realities—thronged upon my memory).—God knows I feel acutely for the people of this unhappy land. I will dedicate my book to some one, who knows thoroughly the country and its needs; some one, who is no hot and headstrong partizan; some one, who has the good of his country at heart, and who has proved it too.

I wheeled my chair round, and wrote this dedication; and I do most solemnly aver, that if I knew any man better acquainted with Ireland and her people than yourself,—if I knew a man who holds in greater detestation the extremes of party,—if I knew a man who loves his country better, or would serve it more faithfully than you,—or one who has given more disinterested proofs of sympathy with the helpless poor,—I would dedicate my book to that man. But I know of no such man.

On some points of minor importance, our opinions may not, perhaps, entirely coincide. In the main, however, I trust, we are agreed: and when I say, that the people of Ireland are oppressed by some, deluded by others, and neglected by all—and that, notwithstanding the folly, and knavery, and neglect, with which Ireland has been, and is, cursed—she needs but a seed-time of kind deeds, in order that a harvest of abundant blessings may be reaped, I anticipate a cordial—*Amen*.

Hoping that your days, like those of your respected father, Sir Joseph, may be prolonged,—and that you may, after long years of kind deeds and usefulness, crown “a life of labour with an age of ease” and honour,

I remain,

My dear Sir,

Yours, most faithfully,

HENRY D. INGLIS.

London, November 1834.

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A JOURNEY THROUGHOUT IRELAND.

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Introductory Observations—Arrival in Dublin, and First Impressions—Deceptiveness of Appearances in Dublin—Striking Contrasts—The Liberty of Dublin, and its Population—Traits of Character and Condition—Improvidence and Ostentation—Dublin as a City—its Streets, Squares, Buildings, and Park—The Mendicity, and other Institutions—Society—Street Population.

It might be considered an impertinence, were I to begin this book by any general assertion of the ignorance of the British public respecting Ireland; there can be no impertinence, however, in acknowledging my own; and now that I have seen Ireland, I may be permitted to say, that during my journey through that country, I found more to correct in my previous impressions and opinions, than in any journey I ever made through any other country. Let me for a moment exclude from this acknowledgment, the social condition of the people of Ireland, and apply it but to all that is visible to

the eye,—her cities, towns, and villages; her mountains, vales, and rivers; her mansions, domains, ruins, and castles; the general aspect, in short, of the country; and—without touching yet upon the social condition of the people—the *aspect* of the population in town and country; in their habitations, their dress, and in all that is external. If I was ignorant upon all these things, how profound must have been my ignorance respecting all that lies beneath the surface; and that can only be come at by patient observation, and anxious inquiry.

I was every where informed that Ireland is a difficult country to know: that in case of attempting to glean opinions on all hands, their contrariety would bewilder me; or, that if, in endeavouring to avoid this cause of bewilderment, my inquiries took a more limited range, it would in that case be difficult, if not impossible, to escape the influence of the peculiar opinions of those amongst whom I might be thrown. This difficulty was strongly urged upon me by an eminent and talented judge, at whose table, in Dublin, my intended journey formed the subject of conversation; and he then said, that he could easily imagine two well educated persons, and both equally free from prejudice, returning to Dublin from a journey through Ireland, with views and impressions directly opposed to each other; according as the letters of introduction which they carried with them, chanced to be to men of one party, or to men of another.

This most to be dreaded cause of error,—a shoal upon which, I fear, many who have written upon Ireland have made shipwreck of truth,—I endeavour to avoid, by seeking and obtaining letters of introduction to men of all opinions, of all ranks, and of all religions; and if, in adopting this course, I encountered that other difficulty, arising from diversity of opinion, I trusted to be able to overcome it, by minute personal observation of the things about which this diversity of opinion existed. I shall give an example of what I mean. I shall suppose that I have an introduction to a landlord who has a great objection to poor laws, and who is, besides, partial

to high rents. I say to him, perhaps, "How are the people off in your neighbourhood,—have you many unemployed labourers?" Or, I say to him, "Are rents pretty moderate hereabouts?" Let it be recollected, that I put these questions in utter ignorance of the character and opinions of the individual whom I address; for it may happen, that this man is a good and considerate landlord, and no foe to poor laws. He might probably say, in reply to the first question; "Indeed the people are pretty well off; we have scarcely any unemployed labourers hereabouts." And to my second question he might say; "Indeed rents are pretty moderate in this neighbourhood; we have many comfortable farmers hereabouts." I might put the same questions to an individual of that extreme party, which is desirous of making every thing as bad as possible: and the reply would probably be, "Egad, half the people here are starving;" or, "the whole land in this parish is rack-rented."

All this is very puzzling; but the corrective is to be found in personal observation, and more minute inquiry. If I go to the market-place of the little town, and see some scores of men standing with agricultural implements in their hands, willing to be hired at eight-pence a-day without diet, and yet not hired,—then I am sure that there is not constant employment for all who desire it: or, if I go into half-a-dozen cabins, and find every one a filthy hovel, filled with squalid and ragged children, greedily scrambling for a dry potato: or, if I walk into the country, and meet women who have been begging a few potatoes amongst the farmers; and if I return with them, and find that they are carrying the potatoes home to an infirm mother or father, or husband out of work, or famishing children,—then surely I am able to estimate at its true value the opinion of the individual who assured me, that "the people were pretty well off." If, on the other hand, I find few labourers idle, and if I find cabins comparatively habitable, and their inmates luxuriating on potatoes and butter-milk, enough and to spare; I am then able to correct

the assertion of the individual who said half the people were starving.

It is evident, that upon all matters touching the social condition of the people, opinions may be corrected and estimated by personal observation : and although in journeying through Ireland one finds abundant cause for astonishment in the widely varying opinions and contradictory assertions upon every subject connected with the country and the people ; I yet believe that truth may be come at by any one who will take pains to seek it out, and who comes to the search with an unbiassed mind :—and before entering upon my journey, I would only add, that I lay claim to this distinction. I have no purpose to serve, no party to please, no interest to consult. I am in every sense unfettered. To be dishonest, therefore, would be an injury to myself ; and this is, to the public, the best guarantee for truth.

EARLY on a fine spring morning, I crossed the bay of Dublin, and entered Kingston harbour a little after sunrise. The bay of Dublin has been so often described, that it needs neither description nor eulogy from me. I will only observe, that if it be deficient in some of those attractions which characterise the rival bays of more southern climes, it will yield to none, in the extent and depth of its arch, or in the form and character of its mountain boundaries.

When I stepped on shore at Kingston, I looked around me with the same curiosity and interest which I have been accustomed to feel on setting foot on other foreign lands ; for my ignorance of Ireland might well justify me in looking upon Ireland as a foreign land, and upon her people as foreigners. This I consider an advantage : for unless a country be so regarded, I question if the traveller will be likely to record those minute and common things, which often throw so much light upon the genius and condition of a people ; and by the omission of which, the graphic character of a

work is so much impaired. It was somewhat too early in the morning to find much food for observation. I saw beggars as importunate and as needy as elsewhere—porters as loquacious, but more orderly—waiters as eloquent in urging the claims of their hotels—and a new race, the drivers of the jaunting-cars, vociferous in their recommendations of the superior advantages of their vehicles, in convenience and cheapness, over all rival and more ambitious conveyances.

First impressions of Dublin are decidedly favourable. Entering from Kingston, there is little to be seen that is unworthy the approach to a capital; and without passing through any of those wretched suburbs which stretch in many other directions, one is whirled at once into a magnificent centre, where there is an assemblage of all that usually gives evidence of wealth and taste, and of the existence of a great and flourishing city.

A stranger arriving in Dublin in Spring, as I did, will be struck, even less by the architectural beauty of the city, than by other kinds of splendour: I allude to the indulgences of luxury, and the apparent proofs of wealth, that are every where thrust upon the eye—the numerous private vehicles that fill the streets, and even blockade many of them; the magnificent shops for the sale of articles of luxury and taste, at the doors of which, in Grafton-street, I have counted upwards of twenty handsome equipages; and in certain quarters of the city, the number of splendid houses, and “legions” of liveried servants. But a little closer observation and more minute inquiry, will in some measure correct these impressions; and will bring to mind the well-known and well-founded proverb, that “it is not all gold that glitters.”

And if caution be necessary in drawing conclusions respecting the wealth of Dublin from what meets the eye, tenfold caution is required in drawing any conclusion respecting the condition of Ireland, from even the *real* prosperity of Dublin. I saw comparatively few shops closed, comparatively few houses untenanted. No one complained of want of business: and it is a fact, that all the coachmakers were in such

full employment, that no contract could be obtained for building coaches on the Dublin and Kingston railroad. But for my own part, I would rather see a lack of employment among the coachmakers, if this were a proof that Irish landlords remained on their estates, and ran jaunting-cars in place of carriages through their counties; and I would rather see a less competition for fine houses, and smaller fines paid for leases of shops, if this were a proof that there was a less influx of country gentry into Dublin.

But this appearance of even Dublin prosperity is somewhat deceptive. I have already hinted that "it is not all gold that glitters;" by which I mean, that the Dublin tradesman sets up his car and his country-house, with a capital that a London tradesman would look upon but as a beginning for industry to work upon: and I believe it may be asserted with truth, that there is less profitable trade in Dublin now, than was found some years ago. Dublin formerly possessed an extensive, safe, and very lucrative commission trade from both the West Indies and England; but the facilities of steam navigation are now so great, that the country dealers throughout Ireland, who formerly made their purchases in Dublin, now pass over to England, and there lay in their stocks. This may possibly be good for the public,—I do not know whether it be or not,—I merely state a fact not favourable to the prosperity of Dublin.

In walking through the streets of Dublin, strange and striking contrasts are presented between grandeur and poverty. In Merrion-square, St. Stephen's-green, and elsewhere, the ragged wretches that are sitting on the steps, contrast strongly with the splendour of the houses and the magnificent equipages that wait without: pass from Merrion-square or Grafton-street, about three o'clock, into what is called the Liberty, and you might easily fancy yourself in another and distant part of Europe. I was extremely struck, the first time I visited the outskirts of the city in the direction of the Phoenix-park, with the strong resemblances to the population of Spanish towns which the pauper population of Dublin

presented. I saw the same rags, and apparent indolence—the result of a want of employment, and a low state of moral feeling: boys with bare heads and feet, lying on the pavement, whose potato had only to be converted into a melon or a bit of wheaten bread, to make them fit subjects for Murillo; and houses and cottages in a half-ruined state, with paneless windows or no windows at all. I was also struck with the small number of provision-shops. In London every fifth or sixth shop is a bacon and cheese-shop. In Dublin, luxuries of a different kind offer their temptations. What would be the use of opening a bacon shop, where the lower orders, who are elsewhere the chief purchasers of bacon, cannot afford to eat bacon, and live upon potatoes?

As I have mentioned the lower orders in Dublin, I may add, that the house in which I lived in Kildare-street being exactly opposite to the Royal Dublin Society, which was then exhibiting a cattle-show, I was very favourably situated for observing, among the crowd collected, some of those little traits which throw light upon character and condition. I remarked, in particular, the great eagerness of every one to get a little employment, and earn a penny or two. I observed another less equivocal proof of low condition. After the cattle had been fed, the half-eaten turnips became the perquisite of the crowd of ragged boys and girls without. Many and fierce were the scrambles for these precious relics; and a half-gnawed turnip, when once secured, was guarded with the most vigilant jealousy, and was lent for a mouthful to another longing tatterdemalion, as much apparently as an act of extraordinary favour, as if the root had been a pineapple. Yet these mouthfuls were freely given; and I have seen, that where two boys contended who should take charge of a gentleman's horse, the boy who obtained the preference and got the penny or twopence, divided it with his rival. These were pleasing traits; and were indicative of that generosity of character which displays itself in so many kindly shapes; but which is perhaps also in some degree the parent

of that improvidence, to which the evils of absenteeism are partly to be ascribed.

There can be no doubt that this trait in national character—improvidence, allied with a love of ostentation—has greatly swelled the lists of absentees, and helps in no inconsiderable degree to keep up the deceptive appearance of Dublin wealth. With few exceptions, a Dublin tradesman who has realized 10,000*l.*, or perhaps a greatly less sum, is above his business, sets up his jaunting-car, becomes the possessor of a villa, and entertains company. Ostentation, too, is displayed in the most singular things. I have counted twenty-seven hackney-coaches and sixteen cars, in the funeral procession of a person in the humbler walks of life: and the passion for display on the part of the deceased's relatives, seemed to have been communicated to his guests, for the carriages were all thrown open; and from the gaiety of the dresses, one might have easily mistaken the cavalcade for a procession of wedding guests. Many of my readers have seen this—it may be seen any day. But as it struck me, who had never seen it before, as singular, it may be worth telling to others.

Dublin, for its size, is a handsomer city than London. Sackville-street will compare with any street in Europe; Merrion-square and St. Stephen's-green surpass in extent any of the squares in the British metropolis. There are points of view in Dublin, embracing the principal streets, the quays (for Dublin has quays), and some of the finest public edifices, more striking I think than any that are to be found in London: and although the Irish capital can boast of no St. Paul's, yet, in the architectural beauty of some of her public buildings, she has just reason for pride. I need but name the Custom-house, and the Bank of Ireland, with its magnificent and yet classically chaste colonnades, in proof of this assertion.

The inhabitants of Dublin are justly proud of their Phoenix-park. Neither in extent, nor in natural beauty, will any of the London parks bear the slightest comparison with it. It

was here that, for the first time, I saw those magnificent thorn trees, which I afterwards found so constant an adorning of every gentleman's park, and which, even by the highways, greatly outvie the thorns of our English lanes. The Phoenix-park is of enormous extent—said, and I believe truly, to contain nearly three thousand English acres. Like Greenwich-park, it has its mounts, and its fine single trees, and its shady avenues; but these are more like the avenues of the *bois de Boulogne*; and besides all this, it has its valleys, and ravines, and extensive groves. In fact, the Phoenix-park, both in extent, and in diversity of surface, is superior to any public park, promenade, prater, or Prado, belonging to any European city that I know. The access, however, is bad. On one side, it is approached through a bad suburb; and by any way, it is distant and dusty. That it should be the latter, surprised me; for surely, where there are so many unemployed poor, and such abundance of water, the access to this great resort ought to be deficient in no advantage which labour could secure. The Zoological-gardens have lately been constructed on an eligible part of the Phoenix-park; and when I visited Dublin, were quite a fashionable lounge. As much as 30*l.* per day, were taken from visitors by the sixpenny entrance fee.

Notwithstanding the fascination of Dublin society, my anxiety to commence my journey increased; for Dublin is not Ireland—and it was Ireland I had come to see. Some of the most interesting among the public institutions, particularly the Bank, and Trinity College, and the neighbouring Catholic College of Maynooth, I resolved to delay visiting until my return to Dublin. There was one institution, however, of which I had heard so much, that I could not leave Dublin without visiting it. I allude to the Mendicity Society. This society may be considered a concentration of all the industrious pauperism of Dublin. In a country where there is no legal provision for even the aged and infirm, some institution of this kind is no doubt essential, not only on a principle of humanity, but for common

decency's sake. But such institutions are, after all, miserable make-shifts; and a visit to the Dublin Mendicity Society will not put anybody in love with that system of voluntary charity, which we are told by an eminent divine is so blessed an encourager of human sympathies.

When I visited the Dublin Mendicity Society, there were 2,145 persons on the charity, of whom 200 were Protestants. The finances were then at a very low ebb; and the directors of the institution were threatening a procession of the mendicants through the streets, by way of warming the charity of the spectators. This, I understand, has once or twice been resorted to; and I confess, I cannot conceive any thing more disgraceful to a civilized community. The English reader, who has never visited Ireland, can have no conception of a spectacle such as this. What a contrast to the gaiety of Grafton-street, would be the filth, and rags, and absolute nakedness, which I saw concentrated in the court of the institution! The support of this charity is a heavy tax upon the benevolent feelings of the Protestant population; 50*l.* is subscribed by the Protestant, for 1*l.* that is subscribed by the Catholic population. I was sorry to learn this; for although it be true that wealth lies chiefly amongst the Protestants, yet it is the middle classes, rather than the wealthy, who support this institution; and 50*l.* for 1*l.* is surely out of proportion.

I will not enter into any details respecting an institution which cannot, I trust, be a permanent one. I saw some at work, earning a pittance of a few pence per week. I saw hundreds, for whom no employment could be found, lying and sitting in the court, waiting for the mess which had tempted them from their hovels, and the incertitude of mendicancy—which many however prefer; and I saw an attempt at teaching the young—who, whatever progress they may make in head learning, cannot, I fear, make great progress in morals, consigned, as they are, after day-light, to the care of their worthless parents; and returning to the hovels in which vice and misery are so often united.

The same day that I visited the Mendicity Society, I visited also two other institutions—the House of Industry, and the Foundling. The former of these is upon an enlarged, and very admirable footing, and is altogether as fine an institution of the kind as I have anywhere seen. The Foundling Hospital was, at one time, an immense institution, providing for not less than 10,000 children. This institution is now breaking up, and is to be superseded by separate country hospitals. The education of the children in this great hospital, having been a Protestant education, the Catholic party in Ireland could not look upon it with much favour; and the new arrangement is generally said to be the result of Catholic interest—I know not with what truth.

No well recommended stranger in Dublin, can leave it without many pleasant recollections; for it must be associated with much of hospitality and kindness; and with much of that refinement that lends to society so great a charm. There is in Dublin all the material for the enjoyments of society; excellent houses; handsome furniture and appointments; a sufficiency of domestics; good taste; and a will to make all these subservient to the pleasures of intercourse, and the virtue of hospitality.

I should say of the street population of the best quarters of Dublin, that it differs little from that of London; and that, but for the multitude of jaunting-cars, which are peculiar to the country, one set down in Sackville or Grafton-street, would scarcely perceive any thing un-English in the aspect of the population. But there are differences, which a somewhat closer observation will detect. The ladies dress more gaily, gentlemen not quite so well. Beggars, if not greatly more numerous than in London, are greatly more ragged and miserable looking; but, above all, there is less an air of business than among the street population of London. There is a greater proportion of loungers; and a less number of those whose quick step and eager look,

bespeak occupation and its rewards. Need I say, that there is also a difference between English and Irish physiognomy : but there is no describing this difference. It exists, however ; and will be remarked by the stranger, even on a very cursory glance : and certainly, not to the disadvantage of the Irish females, whose generally high foreheads, and intellectual expression, were not thrown away upon me.

CHAPTER II.

Journey through Wicklow to Avoca—The Meeting of the Waters. and the Vale of Avoca—The Jaunting-car—Condition of the People, and Mode of Life—Facts—Religious Differences—Journey to Wexford—Gorey, and its neighbourhood—The People—Loan Society—Rents—Orange Lodges—Lord Courtown's Domain—Ferns and its Bishop—Enniscorthy—Lord Portsmouth's Estate—Approaches to Wexford—the Town and its Inhabitants—Prices—The Barony of Forth; the state and peculiarities of the Inhabitants.

I CANNOT commence my journey without acknowledging the assistance which all who were acquainted with my project so eagerly proffered. I have already said, that I was desirous of hearing what men of all conditions, and of all opinions, had to say: and in the accomplishment of this wish, I found every aid. I carried with me from Dublin, upwards of one hundred and thirty letters of introduction, to persons of all ranks, from the peer to the farmer (to the peasant I introduced myself); and of all opinions, from the Orange magistrate of Down and Derry, to the Catholic repealer of Kilkenny and Tipperary; from the protestant dignitary to the country curate; from the Catholic bishop, to the parish priest. To those acquainted with Ireland, I need not say how these letters were prolific; I am persuaded, that from leaving Dublin until returning to it, I delivered at least three times the number of letters I have mentioned. I have two objects in mentioning these facts: the one, as demonstrative of the desire of all parties that the truth should be told; the other, as proving to the

public that I was not in the hands of any particular party. But the former of these requires a few words of explanation. Whether from the nature of the introductions I carried from England, or from conversation, or from the books which I had already published, there was a general impression that I meant to speak the truth; and this being once believed, I found men of all parties eager to put me in *their* way of finding it. It may be, that some had not truth in view; and that the letters which I received from these, to persons of their own sentiments, were meant to perpetuate error. This *may* have been: I do not know that it was; and I trust, and indeed believe, that the instances were rare. To me, however, the advantage was the same: and there is one thing certain, that my opinions cannot be biassed by the hospitalities I received, for these I received equally from men of all parties and all beliefs.

I left Dublin in the afternoon, for Inniskerry, a little village about nine miles from Dublin, on the borders of the county of Wicklow; and arrived there about dusk, after a drive through an agreeable country, fertile and well wooded for several miles after leaving Dublin, but of a wilder character as it approached the mountains.

It would be no difficult matter to fill a chapter with descriptive sketches of the county of Wicklow; and Inniskerry, the village at which I have now arrived, is always the first head-quarters of the Wicklow tourist. But I have no intention of filling any great space in this volume with descriptions of scenery; and where I make an exception to this rule, it will be in favour of places less likely to be known to the reader, than the Dargel, the Devil's Glyn, Powerscourt, and the Seven Churches. It is certainly a great advantage, that which is possessed by the inhabitants of Dublin, of being able, during a three days' tour, to see so sweet an union of the beautiful and the picturesque, as many parts of Wicklow present; and even to form a conception of the still higher attractions of mountain scenery. It is true, every thing here is *en petit*; but it is a beautiful minuteness.

From my head quarters at Inniskerry, which, by the bye, is a clean and prettily situated little village, I visited the Glen of the Downs, the Dargle, and Powerscourt, whose waterfall, so much extolled in the Guide-books, pleased me less than the fine vegetation and magnificent timber on the domain through which the road is constructed: and on the evening after my arrival at Inniskerry, I took my seat, in company with five other persons, on a public car, which plies between that village and another, called Roundwood, about nine miles distant.

It is singular that I should have written a whole chapter, without having made special mention of the Irish jaunting, outside car. Although there are carriages of all descriptions in Ireland, and coaches too on many of the public roads, the jaunting car is the national vehicle; and Ireland would scarcely be Ireland without it. It may be said completely to supersede, as a private vehicle, the whole of the gig tribe,—dennet, tilbury, cabriolet, &c.; and to be a formidable rival to the coach, as a public conveyance. Throughout the whole of the south, and a great part of the west of Ireland, the public, as well as the mails, are chiefly conveyed by cars; and it is no small convenience to the traveller, that he may travel post, by a car, at eight-pence, and in some parts, at six-pence per mile, throughout Ireland, as expeditiously, and, in fine weather, far more agreeably, than in a post-chaise. But to return to its peculiarities, and pros and cons: every body has no doubt seen an Irish car, for a stray specimen now and then makes its appearance across the Channel; and I need not therefore tell, that an Irish car is a vehicle generally drawn by one horse; and that two, four, or six persons sit back to back. How any thing so unsociable should have been first thought of, it is difficult to understand; but it is fair to admit, that when few persons are seated on a car, there is an easy, lounging way of sitting, not absolutely prohibitory of social intercourse. The great advantage of an Irish car, is the facility of getting up and down; which, in travelling on a hilly road, is very desirable. But as I shall

have frequent occasion to mention these vehicles, I shall at present proceed on my journey.

It chanced that I was seated next to the Protestant clergyman of an adjoining parish; and we soon got into conversation. He told me he was a considerable landowner, as well as a clergyman; and spoke strongly of the discomfort of having Catholic tenantry about him; which, however, he was doing his best to rid himself of. I was unfortunate in this first specimen of the country clergy I had met. I told him I thought he was fortunate in having a tenantry at all; and so as they paid their rents, it seemed a matter of comparatively little importance of what religion they were; and notwithstanding the little sympathy which I evinced, we continued pretty good friends as far as Roundwood. The country between Inniskerry and Roundwood is very varied in its aspect; for several miles, the road runs through the Powerscourt domain; but afterwards, through a wild and uninteresting country, but evidently under improvement. I noticed more than one substantial farm-house newly built, or in course of building.

It was after dark, and on a somewhat chilly evening, when I reached Roundwood; and here, for the first time, I experienced the comforts of a turf fire; the easiest lighted, and therefore, to a traveller, the most agreeable of all fires. For home comfort, commend me to a seacoal fire! but in travelling, commend me to whatever kind of fire soonest produces the desired results,—heat and cheerfulness. There is nothing to detain one at Roundwood; and I left it accordingly, early next morning, with the intention of sleeping at Avoca, and of resting there a few days. From Roundwood I passed through a wild but more interesting country; I had the colour and the fragrance of the bright whin blossom, and the companionship of a noisy brook. I made a little *detour*, to glance at Glendalough, more commonly known as “the Seven Churches,”—a wild spot, not unworthy of a visit,—and then continued my journey to Rathdrum and Avoca. After passing Rathdrum, the country improves in picturesque-

ness ; and a few miles beyond Rathdrum the attention of the traveller is arrested by the driver of his car turning round, and saying, " the Meeting of the Waters, your Honour." But for associations, this spot, I think, would disappoint the traveller. There is a bridge, and the meeting of two streams, and wooden hills, and the handsome residence of Colonel Howard ; but to my mind, the character of the valley improves in beauty as we descend. The valley widens ; green meadows are left between the river and the more retiring banks ; and the feathery birch, then bursting into leaf, contrasted finely with the dark firs, and with those beautiful evergreens of which, in my journey through Ireland, I shall so often have occasion to speak. Towards evening, I arrived at Wooden Bridge Inn, Avoca.

" There's not in the wide world a valley so sweet."

That I will not venture to say ; but I will say, " sweet vale of Avoca !" for this I can say conscientiously.

I remained here three days, walking up the glens, and among the mountains ; mixing with, walking with, and talking with the people : and allowing the interest which I felt in a fine and romantic country, to be lost in the higher interest which attaches to the social condition of the people.

The contemplation was a less pleasant one :—for notwithstanding that I was in the next county to Dublin ; that Wicklow is a county *ornée*, full of villas and gentlemen's seats ; and that the mines in this county, and in the vicinity of the spot which is at present my head-quarters, employ nearly two thousand persons ;—notwithstanding all this, I found little satisfactory in the condition of the people.

I found rents in Wicklow such as, for the most part, could never be paid by the produce of the land ; and the small farmers, as well as labourers, barely subsisting. High rent was the universal complaint ; and the complaint was fully borne out, by the wretched manner in which I found the people—Catholic and Protestant—living. And if the ques-

tion be put to them, why they take land at a rent which they know it will not bear,—the reply is always the same: how were they to live? what could they do? From which answer we at once arrive at the truth,—that competition for land in Ireland, is but the outbiddings of desperate circumstances.

As for the condition of the labouring classes, I found little to bear out the assertions of some of my Dublin friends, to whom Wicklow ought to have been familiar,—that I should find all the labourers employed, and all tolerably comfortable. On one of the afternoons I spent here, I walked up a mountain road, and after a short walk, reached a glen with several cabins scattered in it; and three of these I visited.

The first I entered was a mud cabin,—one apartment. It was neither air nor water tight; and the floor was extremely damp. The furniture consisted of a small bedstead, with very scanty bedding, a wooden bench, and one iron pot; the embers of some furze burnt on the floor; and there was neither chimney nor window. The rent of this wretched cabin, to which there was not a yard of land, was two pounds.

The next cabin I entered, was situated on the hill side: in size and material it was like the other. I found in it a woman and her four children. There were two small bedsteads, and no furniture, excepting a stool, a little bench, and one pot. Here also were the burnt embers of some furze, the only fuel the poor in this neighbourhood can afford to use. The children were all of them in rags; and the mother regretted that on that account she could not send them to school. The husband of this woman was a labourer, at sixpence per day; —*eighty* of which sixpences,—that is, eighty days' labour, being absorbed in the rent of the cabin, which was taken out in labour; so that there was little more than fourpence-halfpenny per day left, for the support of a wife and four children, with potatoes at fourpence a stone.

I entered one other cabin: it was the most comfortless of the three; it was neither air nor water tight, and had *no* bedstead, and no furniture, excepting a stool and a pot; and there were not even the embers of a fire. In this miserable

abode there was a decently dressed woman with five children ; and her husband was also a labourer, at sixpence per day. This family had had a pig ; but it had been taken for rent a few days before. They had hoped to be able to appropriate the whole of the daily sixpence to their support, and to pay the rent by means of the pig ; but the necessities of nature, with the high price of potatoes, had created an arrear before the pig was old enough to be sold. The landlord might not be to blame ; he was a very small farmer of hill land, at twenty shillings an acre ; and was just as hard set to live, and pay *his* rent, as his humbler dependent was.

I am only beginning my journey : this is but the county of Wicklow ; and I was told that I should find all so comfortable in Wicklow, that from the comparatively happy condition of the peasantry there, I must be cautious in forming any opinion of the peasantry generally. While I write this sentence, I write in utter ignorance of what I may yet see ; for I write this work almost in the manner of a diary,—noting down my observations from week to week : but from what I have already seen, I am entitled to fling back with indignation the assertion, that all the Irish industrious poor may find employment. But what employment ? employment which affords one stone of dry potatoes per day for a woman and her four children.

A labourer in this county considers himself fortunate in having daily employment at sixpence throughout the year ; and many are not so fortunate. I found some who received only fivepence ; but there are many who cannot obtain constant employment, and these have occasional labour at ten-pence or one shilling ; but this, only for a few weeks at a time. I found the small farmers living very little more comfortably than the labourers. A little buttermilk added to the potatoes, made the chief difference.

Upon one subject, it is obvious that I must substitute inquiry for personal observation ; I mean in relation to the important question, whether there has been any improvement in the condition of the people of late years. I might indeed

infer, that no improvement *could* have taken place in the condition of a people whom I find in rags,—living in mud cabins, without furniture and windows, and sometimes without chimneys; and existing upon a scanty meal of potatoes. But I have not contented myself with this inference, and have always anxiously inquired of those most able to give me correct information,—always old persons, and persons of different ranks and opinions; one or two landlords; one or two farmers, both Catholic and Protestant; and frequently the Protestant clergyman and the Catholic priest; and of Wicklow, I may say, that I found nothing to induce the belief, that any improvement had taken place in the condition of either the small farmer or the labouring classes. The number of absolutely unemployed poor has decreased with the active working of the mines at Glendalure, which employ about two thousand persons. But task work, and consequent high wages, have attracted many from a distance; and the miners are a drunken and improvident race. One who had earned thirty shillings the past week, came into the inn while I was there; and I heard him regretting that it was impossible for him to drink the whole of this sum.

I deeply regretted to see at Avoca, a proof of the bad feeling which, in that part of the country appears to exist between the Catholic and Protestant population. I was sitting at the window of the inn, on Sunday evening, when a man, in a state of intoxication, came along the road, calling out, "To the Devil with the Boyne waters, and they who drink them." Presently three men, who were sitting on the bridge, followed the offender, threw him down, beat and kicked him brutally, and stamped upon his face; ten or a dozen persons were by, and no one interfered; and the men walked away, leaving the other on the ground in a state of insensibility. The explanation is this: there was till lately, only one brewery at Rathdrum, the property of Catholics. Another brewery was recently set up by Protestants, in the same town; and the ale brewed in it is called by the Catholics, "the Boyne waters." I regret in the

outset of my book, to be obliged to record these facts. I trust I shall not have many such to record.

Before leaving the vale of Avoca, I must endeavour to give the reader some general idea of a spot so celebrated in song. The whole vale is about five miles long, and is generally about a quarter of a mile broad. It begins at the spot called "the meeting of the waters," where the Avonbeg and the Avonmore join their streams, and take the name of Avoca. Nearly four miles lower, another stream joins the Avoca; and this second meeting of waters, quite as beautiful as the first meeting, is said, by those who live near to it, to be *the* meeting of the waters. The vale of Avoca is chiefly in pasture: the fields are divided by whin hedges; and the hills which flank the valley on both sides, are covered to the summit with wood, chiefly ash, birch, and fir, mingled with "the green holly," and with laurel and laurestinus. Abundance of sweetbriar, too, lends its perfume, and millions of blue hyacinths their beauty, to the shady paths that traverse in a hundred directions these wooded hills.

I left Avoca for Gorey and Wexford by the coach, which passed by the inn door. The road skirts the river, and runs underneath fine wooded banks almost all the way to Arklow: one of the poorest looking villages that could well be seen. It is entirely supported by the herring-fishery during the season; but all the rest of the year is miserably off. Soon after leaving Arklow, we entered the county of Wexford; and after passing through a poorish, uninteresting, and not thickly peopled country, I reached Gorey, where I purposed making a halt, having several letters of introduction in the neighbourhood.

I found a good deal to please me in and about Gorey. There are a considerable number of resident landlords in this part of Wexford; and the property of the absentee landlords is under good management. The condition of the people, too, especially of the farmers, is, upon the whole, better than in Wicklow; though here also, any thing approaching to constant employment for the labourer, is not

to be had, and the wages of labour are scarcely higher. In my first perambulation in the neighbourhood of the town, I visited two very nice clean cabins, with partition walls in them, and a respectable display of crockery. One of these had been erected by the tenant, who paid thirty shillings ground-rent. The sum necessary for building the cabin had been advanced by a loan society, which has been established in Gorey; and from which, I found a general impression, that great good had resulted. Artizans and country labourers equally availed themselves of it;—the shoe-maker, for instance, obtained money to purchase leather; the countryman, to buy a pig or build a cabin, or to seed his patch of ground. The sums lent are from 1*l.* to 5*l.*; and are repaid by weekly instalments, at the rate of a shilling for each 1*l.* lent: sixpence interest on each 1*l.* is also paid; and every borrower must give two joint-securities, and produce a character from two householders, for honesty and sobriety. I found that the loans were repaid with strict punctuality, and that the society had not actually lost one penny. Independently of the advantage in condition, which must accrue to a small place from a circulating capital of some hundred pounds, good moral effects are likely, I think, to result. Habits of punctuality are encouraged, and so is sobriety; since this virtue is essential to obtaining a loan. Supposing the advantages of these societies admitted, could not such establishments be made general throughout Ireland, by government advancing money to local committees (upon the joint-security of such committees, as trustees), at such a rate of interest—say four per cent., as would cost the nation nothing? This, I think, is worthy of consideration.

Most of the cabins I visited in this neighbourhood, boasted a pig; in many cases, the result of a loan. Most of them were in styes, but some in the cabins, where, as Paddy says, he has the best right to be, “since it’s he that pays the rint.” “We’ll be quite comfortable when we get the stye up,” said one young woman not twenty years of age, who, with two children and the pig, occupied a very clean neat cabin;—her

husband was a labourer, at ten-pence per day, without diet. The secret of these very nice cabins, I found to be, a premium offered by an agricultural society, of from 10s. to 2l., for the cleanest and most comfortable cottages. To obtain these premiums, great exertions are made; and a loan from the loan society, I found, had in most cases been necessary, to produce that neatness and air of comfort likely to secure the premium. I need scarcely say, that there was otherwise no improvement in condition; but that, on the contrary, greater privations were requisite, in order to pay back the weekly instalment.

Land in this part of Wexford is universally let too high. A very fatal admission was made to me here, by an agent of extensive properties, the rents of which were among the lowest in the neighbourhood. He said, that although the price of the land let by him was not determined by competition; that is, although he did not let to the highest bidder, he nevertheless took more money than the land was worth; and that this, he was in a manner forced to do, in order not to depart too entirely from the practice of the neighbourhood. I found that where farms had been let by competition, farmers were miserably off. Others I found, with farms of sixty and seventy acres, let at twenty-five shillings overhead, comfortable; these farms, if they had been let to the highest bidder, would have brought thirty-five shillings; and the tenant, in place of being comfortable, would have been in the condition of the labourer.

Religious bitterness is carried very far in this neighbourhood; and this may be mainly ascribed to the recent institution of an Orange lodge. If government will apply such remedial measures as the state of Ireland requires, and will present a firm front to all improper demands, there will be no occasion for Orange lodges. The results of this ill-judged zeal are strikingly displayed at Gorey. There is a Protestant and a Catholic inn—known by these names; the Protestant and the Catholic coach, owned by, driven by, and supported by, persons of different persuasions; and the very

children, playing, or squabbling in the street, are divided into sects. These are miserable doings, for which the institutors of the Orange lodge have to answer.

While at Gorey, I visited the domain of Lord Courtown; which is small, but very beautiful. It is a little green Paradise, sloping up from the sea, with fine avenues of old wood, and with clumps of evergreens, laurel especially—the luxuriant growth of which I had never seen equalled in England.

They are constructing a little harbour, which, when completed, will be of much use to the fishery on this coast, which has greatly suffered from the want of some refuge.

It struck me, as I returned from Courtown, and walked up the street of Gorey, that the people looked less industrious than the population of an English town. Over almost every half-door, somebody was leaning with crossed arms; and others were sitting at their doors, doing nothing. No doubt the little retail shopkeepers had some idle time on their hands; but English people, both men and women, generally find some little job to do; and when one sees the tattered coats and smallclothes, which in Ireland are worn even by others than beggars, and which ten minutes, and a needle and thread, would put to rights, unfavourable comparisons are apt to be drawn.

After spending two days at Gorey, I proceeded to Wexford; the road to which, by Ferns and Enniscorthy, is rather an interesting one. Between Gorey and Ferns, I passed through an open country, with furze inclosures, and all under cultivation. I noticed some country houses with flourishing plantations, and the cabins by the way-side were not of the worst description. Most of the inmates possessed pigs: some had styes, but I noticed several snouts at the cabin doors. There chanced to be in the coach a parcel for the Bishop of Ferns; and in order to deliver it, the coach left the high road, and drove about two miles through the domain, and passed his lordship's house. This evinced some respect for the church. The bishop's park is pretty, and the

house handsome and substantial. Ferns is a poor village, with nothing to recommend it excepting some rather extensive ruins, part of them, they say, of a king's palace.

The approach to Enniscorthy is imposing: there is an ancient look about it, and some grey towers; and the navigable river, and bridge, and wooded banks, form rather a striking assemblage of images. The reader probably knows that Vinegar-hill, of bloody memory, lies close to this town. Enniscorthy possesses extraordinary advantages, and ought to be an extremely flourishing town; for the corn of the greater part of the county of Wexford passes through the market of Enniscorthy, and is shipped there. But this town is one of the victims of absenteeism of the worst kind; for even the agent of Lord Portsmouth, to whom the town belongs, does not live in the neighbourhood, but in Dublin, and only visits Enniscorthy to collect rent,—leaving, no doubt, some subordinate individual to scrape in the odds and ends which he has not had time to collect. Notwithstanding that it was a holiday when I passed through Enniscorthy, there was a busy corn market, and a large concourse of people in the streets, buying and selling.

The country between Enniscorthy and Wexford is extremely interesting; the banks of the Slaney, a fine navigable river, are fertile and beautiful, and there is a fair sprinkling of gentlemen's seats. The country is almost all under tillage, and I every where noticed an excellent promise of crops. The cabins too were not of the worst kind; most of them had windows and chimneys: and the children about the doors were several degrees removed from nakedness. About three miles from Wexford, I crossed a wooden bridge of extraordinary length, thrown over the estuary, which here opens out into several fine reaches, presenting, both above and below the bridge, some very sweet scenes of the softer character. The immediate approach to Wexford is excellent: there is a fine broad road, flanked by many excellent houses; and being the evening of a holiday, I had a favourable sample of the population.

The best part of Wexford is seen before getting fairly into it. Its localities are soon described. It consists of one very long, and very narrow street, and a quay running parallel to it, and of nearly equal length; together with a few short side streets, somewhat wider than the main street, and not so much the resort of business. There is also a very long, poor suburb, chiefly inhabited by the fishermen. There are many good shops in Wexford, and I heard no complaint of want of trade; and the best illustration I can give of the comfortable condition of the people of Wexford is, that during two days which I spent in the town, I was not once asked for charity. I do not mean to say, there is not a pauper, or a person out of employment in Wexford; but it may be said that Wexford is a flourishing town. I only saw one thing to contradict this opinion—two or three unroofed and half-ruined houses, which must have remained long in that condition, as the walls and window ledges were covered with wall-flower. The people of Wexford county generally are said to be a money getting people: and in the system which prevails extensively with regard to marriages, among the rural population, there is considerable evidence of this. The disposal of farmers' daughters is matter of regular traffic—acre for acre, or pound for pound—and so great is the difficulty of marrying girls without portions, that it is no unusual thing to find farmers, who are in comfortable circumstances, living as poorly as the common labourer, or the rack-rented tenant of a few acres, in order that they may save a few hundreds for *fortuning off* their girls.

There are no public buildings in Wexford of any importance, excepting the gaol, which is large and handsome.

Wexford is a cheap place of residence. When I visited it beef was 4d. per lb., mutton 5d., veal 2d., pork 2½d., fine chickens 1s. a couple, and butter 9d. per lb. A fine turkey may be bought during the season for 3s., and other poultry in proportion; and there is a very plentiful and cheap fish-market.

Before leaving Wexford, I devoted a day to an excursion into the Barony of Forth. This district and its inhabit-

ants are familiar to every one in the south of Ireland; and are become by-words for all that indicates a superior order of things, and a superior race of people. The district commences close to the town of Wexford, and extends about fifteen miles in a south-west direction. The inhabitants were originally a South Welsh colony; and till but of late years, the language of Wales was generally spoken, and is still understood by some of the older people. But to this day, there are other distinctive traits in both the physical appearance of the people, and the moral aspect of society among them, sufficient to denote their independent origin. The character of the people is universally reputed to be industrious, provident, peaceable, cleanly, and sober; and particularly, exhibiting a pride in outward decency of appearance. I had heard much of this district and its inhabitants, and left Wexford early, in a jaunting car, to see all its singularities with my own eyes.

I found a country without any natural beauty, but with every thing else to recommend it. I saw universal tillage, good husbandry, and a comparatively comfortable people. The farm-houses and cottages—for they are cottages rather than cabins—are very thickly strewn; and, with few exceptions, the former are substantial, the latter clean, and comfortable. I visited many of both; for anticipating, and always finding, as I every where have in Ireland, a ready welcome, I left the car, crossed the fields, and unhesitatingly lifted the latch. The farther I travelled into the district, the more striking became its characteristics; and not only did I find the interior of the houses comfortable; but in the flower-pots and little ornamental gardens, I recognized the traits which I have enumerated. In the husbandry of the district, there was every thing to commend. The land was well laboured and clean; the crops of wheat and of beans—the cultivation of which is extensively pursued here—were excellent; and a serviceable plough, with two horses and only one man, showed some knowledge of the economy of labour.

But it must not be imagined, from what I have already

said, that the people of the Barony of Forth are rolling in plenty ; and that the condition of life is utterly different here from the rest of Ireland. This superior neatness, cleanliness, and apparent comfort, are more the result of a distinction in character, than of a distinction in condition. This pride of neatness and decorum has been matter of tradition ; and is rarely forgotten in the children of the present day, whatever deterioration may take place in their condition. Neither, however, would I infer, that the difference is *all* external. Superior industry, and greater providence, have produced among the farmers an improved husbandry, and perhaps a somewhat larger capital ; and this again has been the means of giving more general and regular employment to labourers ; so that in this district, few are unable to find employment, though the wages of labour are not higher than in other places ; nor, consequently, the mode of life greatly different. The potato diet here is not so exclusive as elsewhere ; barley bread is a good deal used ; and among the females, tea is a very universal luxury.

Farms in this barony run from ten up to fifty and sixty acres : but farms of thirty, and from thirty to forty acres, are the most usual : and with farm produce at its present prices, and with an average rent on arable land, of from 2*l.* to 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre, the farmer cannot do a great deal more than live, and pay his rent. I went into the house of a farmer owning forty acres, when he and his family were about to begin dinner. It consisted of potatoes, butter-milk, sweet skimmed milk, barley bread, and butter. The farm had been four generations in the farmer's family : his great-grandfather paid six shillings per acre, his grandfather ten shillings, his father one pound, and he paid two pounds. He said he could live as I saw him live, and pay his rent, with his own and his son's labour, and lay by a trifle for his daughters.

Persons of different religious persuasions, live in the utmost harmony with each other in the Barony of Forth. Difference in creed, is unattended by any results on society ;

—and here also the feuds and factions which in many parts prevail, and the personal collisions which result from them, are absolutely unknown.

The extreme point of my excursion into the harony, was about two miles beyond Broadway, which is indeed at the extremity of the barony; where there is a salt-water lake, a Catholic chapel, a ruin, and an island, which were once objects of religious superstition. In returning to Wexford by another road, I was greatly struck by the gay effect produced by the furze, or as they are called in Scotland, the whin hedges, which form the only enclosures in this district. The furze hedges are very general in Ireland, and are much preferred by the people to every other, and not without reason. In parts of the country where turf is scarce and coal dear, the furze is a ready and abundant fuel: nor is this the only use to which it is put,—the tender shoots are mashed, and given as food to the horses; and the refuse is mixed up and used as manure. There is still another use of a furze hedging. When full grown, it affords in rainy weather a shelter to live stock, which neither thorn nor any other hedge affords: for there are no drippings from a furze hedging. This is a fact of which any pedestrian may agreeably convince himself, if caught in a shower of rain, in the neighbourhood of a furze enclosure.

I noticed a singular usage in returning to Wexford. Passing by a farm-yard, I observed two horses greedily drinking milk out of a large pail. I of course stopped to make some inquiry respecting so unusual a spectacle; and I was informed that the milk not required for the pigs, and the spare potatoes, were always given to the horses, who liked the diet much, and thrived well upon it. I never observed this practice on any other occasion, or in any other place.

CHAPTER III.

Mr. Bianconi and his Establishment—Memoir of Mr. Bianconi—Journey from Wexford to Waterford—New Ross—Land and Farmers—Con-acre—Tithe—Road to Waterford, and Cabins by the road-side—The Quay of Waterford—Export trade of Waterford—Condition of the People—Landed Proprietors—Monk-houses—Whiskey-drinking and Licenses—Neighbouring Watering Places—Cotton Factory at Mayfield—Marquis of Waterford's Domain—The Beresfords—Carrick-on-Suir, and its Poverty—The Duncannon Estates—Return to Waterford—Waterford Beggars—Journey to Kilkenny—Thomastown and its neighbourhood—Pigs, and a new light—Is Ireland an improving Country?—A Holiday—Catholic Population—Land, and Middlemen—Leases—Excursion to Innistoge and Woodstock.

It is singular enough, that Ireland should be indebted to an Italian, for the establishment of a system of easy and cheap communication throughout all the south, and a great part of the west. The name of this public-spirited individual is Charles Bianconi—and as it is at Wexford that the traveller finds himself for the first time within the range of Mr. Bianconi's establishment, I shall make no apology for introducing in this place, just before availing myself of it, some little notice of the establishment, and of the establisher; and I will premise what I have to say, by mentioning that I am indebted for my information to Mr. Bianconi himself, to whose enterprise and public spirit, the people of Ireland are so largely indebted.

It has been incorrectly stated, that Mr. Bianconi came to Ireland as a print-seller: he was respectably connected in Italy; and being as a boy somewhat of a scape-grace, he was

entrusted by his parents to the care of an individual, who was then setting out on a commercial journey to Britain. This individual, to whom was confided the power of breaking in his pupil, in whatever way he chose, chose to employ him in carrying small prints round the country for sale. This delegated drudgery continued during some time; and when the individual who had charge of the youth returned to Italy, Charles Bianconi found no choice but to remain on his own account. From twopenny prints he rose to sixpenny, and from sixpenny to shilling wares; and with its costliness, the weight of his burden increased.

It was while trudging, as he was often accustomed, between Waterford and Clonmel, that it first occurred to him, how agreeable it would be if any cheap conveyance passed along the road, to carry himself and his burden; and some indistinct project then began to be entertained, respecting the establishment of such a conveyance: but it has been erroneously stated, in some Memoirs of Mr. Bianconi that have from time to time appeared, that he set up a car to assist himself as an itinerant print merchant. Gradually he amassed a little money; but it was not until after he had taken advantage of then existing circumstances, to enter into the bullion trade, and had realised a little capital, that he started his first car. For some little time he met with but indifferent success; but gradually the public began to appreciate the convenience; and at length the success of the first car induced him to start a second; and to persevere, until he had become, what he now is, one of the largest proprietors of horses and vehicles in Europe.

Clonmel is Mr. Bianconi's centre; and from thence his cars radiate in every direction—embracing nearly fifty of the chief towns of the south and west; and not only following the high-roads, but connecting these towns with each other by the cross-roads. The establishment reckons between five and six hundred horses, and upwards of two hundred vehicles: and Mr. Bianconi is now the principal contractor besides, for conveying the mails on all the cross-roads of the south and

west of Ireland. The whole establishment is excellently conducted. Every horse has his name; and the names are regularly entered in the way-bills. There is an hospital too for the sick horses; and in his care of his four-footed favourites, Mr. Bianconi does not forget his other dependents. When his drivers become infirm or fall sick, they and their families are taken care of: and apart from his establishment, Mr. Bianconi is foremost in all that relates either to the amelioration of human distress, or to the improvement of his adopted town and country. About 200,000 stone of oats, and about 1,400 tons of hay, are consumed in Mr. Bianconi's establishment. I have omitted to say, that the vehicles used by Mr. Bianconi, are the regular jaunting cars, constructed on a large scale;—that the fares are extremely moderate; and that on the principal lines of road, the rate of travelling is about nine English miles per hour.

I left Wexford, seated on one of Bianconi's cars, at seven A. M. Leaving Wexford, the country is agreeable, undulating, and fruitful; and looking back, I caught some charming views over the estuary, and along its banks. The cottages we passed, were neither of the best nor the worst description: they had generally some kind of windows, and the pig some kind of separate house. We breakfasted at a poor little place, the name of which I do not recollect, and proceeded on to New Ross, which we reached about mid-day; after passing through an uninteresting but a well-cultivated country, chiefly under tillage, deficient in wood, and every where with whin enclosures.

New Ross is an old town, situated on the Barrow, which here divides the county of Wexford from the county Kilkenny. The old town was mostly destroyed during the Rebellion, and has since been partially rebuilt. This town lives chiefly by agriculture, and partly by the business created by the export trade, which commences here on the Barrow, to be re-shipped at Waterford. But notwithstanding these advantages, New Ross is any thing but a flourishing town: I remained a day there; and both by personal observation and inquiry, had

sufficient proof of its poor condition. I found a very large number of the working classes without employment, and the street crowded with ragged mendicants. A considerable proportion of the land in this neighbourhood is in the hands of middle-men, and is rented at from 4*l.* to 6*l.* an acre. I had not hitherto found the con-acre system common in the parts which I had already visited, but here I found it existed to a considerable extent. What con-acre means, is no doubt understood by many of my readers; but as there may be some to whom the term is not familiar, I will explain it. A farmer manures, ploughs, and in every way prepares a large field to receive a crop; a poorer description of persons rent off portions of this field—a half, a quarter, or an eighth of an acre, for one season; and all that these persons have to provide, is the seed which they put in, and they take their chance of the produce. The rent paid for such portions is always high. In the neighbourhood of New Ross, I found it to be from 10*l.* to 12*l.* an acre; and it may be said generally, that the rent is always calculated for the most favourable seasons. The poor man, however, who has no certain employment, and no means of living, undertakes to pay any rent, which, high as it is, a favourable season will enable him to pay; and if, on the contrary, he perceives that the crop is not likely to answer his purpose, he throws up his bit of land, and leaves the landlord to come upon the crop for the rent. I have known as much as 20*l.* per acre agreed to be paid for land, which was not only prepared, but seeded; and all labour also being performed by the landlord.

I found in this neighbourhood, great fear among the landlords, that the tithe-bill, by which the tithe was proposed to be a land tax, would lead to a refusal to pay rent; and a strong disposition on the part of tenants, to resist tithe in every shape. I was shown a lease in which there was a clause to this effect,—that the tenant shall still be answerable for tithe, and shall be bound to pay it, *if the landlord be obliged to pay it*. The lease was of course invalid: but this clause showed a doubt on the part of both landlord and

tenant, whether tithe would be in any shape recovered. The same individual showed me a threatening notice which had just been sent. He had been desirous of letting at a higher rent some land in the neighbourhood of New Ross, which had been previously let at 3*l.* 5*s.*, and had come from Waterford for the purpose; but a threatening notice had been served that morning, and he was unable to get a tenant.

The country between New Ross and Waterford is hilly, open, almost all under tillage, and not very thickly peopled. Both the farm-houses and the cabins were of a worse description than I had yet seen in Wexford, and appeared to get worse as I approached Waterford. While the car was slowly drawn up the steep hills, I always took the opportunity of walking in advance, which permitted me to enter, or look into the cottages. In one, without chimney or window, or a particle of furniture, excepting two broken stools, I found an old infirm man at his breakfast of potatoes and salt. This man was able to work but little, and was supported almost solely by going about the country begging of the farmers: he offered me a potato, which I accepted: and I gave him in return — what I advise every traveller in Ireland to carry with him—a little tobacco. In another cabin, I found a woman working straw for bonnets. She said she could earn by her labour 1*s.* 3*d.* a week. Walking up one of the hills, I overtook about sixty boys and girls, who had been at mass. It was Saturday; and their parents being busy washing, had sent their children to chapel in their stead.

The road from New Ross to Waterford does not run by the river side, although the river runs to Waterford; and it is not until very near the city that the views improve, or that the country bespeaks any approach to a large town. The entrance to Waterford, however, is extremely imposing: the river Suir is crossed by a very long wooden bridge; and the first part of the town one enters is the quay, which, whether in its extent, or in the breadth of the river, or in the beauty of the opposite banks, is unquestionably one of the

very finest quays I recollect to have seen. At full tide the views are indeed beautiful. The quay is little less than a mile in length; and the river is not much less than a quarter of a mile wide. The opposite banks gently slope into green hills, well clothed with wood, and adorned with villas; and the church, called Christendom Church, with its fine surrounding trees, standing close to the water, adds greatly to the beauty of the prospect. The quay of Waterford reminded me of the quay of the Soane, at Lyons.

During the last fifteen years, Waterford has been an improving town; though that improvement has not been at all equal to what might have been expected from its trade; and at the time I visited it, the retail trade of the place was suffering from the low prices of farm produce, and consequent depression of the agriculturists. During the last nine years, the exports of Waterford have nearly doubled; and at present exceed two millions. But an export trade is not the most lucrative: in Waterford there are but few capitalists; the merchants, therefore, carry on their trade under very disadvantageous circumstances; and it is said, that not one twentieth per cent. of the value of the exports remains to Waterford.

Although there are very many unemployed persons in Waterford; and although the number of infirm poor has made a Mendicity Society necessary; and although, as the reader will presently be informed by my personal observation, scenes of the utmost misery and destitution are constantly brought under the notice of any one who walks into the bye streets; yet, taking the circle of country round Waterford, I believe I am entitled from my inquiries, to say, that there has been some improvement among the people. In female clothing, the introduction of cotton has had the effect of improving cleanliness. Waterford stuff used to be the common material; and a gown made of this, would last six or seven years; and during all that time, the pin that fastened it up behind, was never taken out. This dress has been superseded by cotton, and there is therefore an im-

provement in cleanliness. In houses, the premiums offered by the agricultural society, have produced some improvement; and the abolition of the duty on coal, which is now pretty generally used in and about Waterford, has led to some improvement in the construction of farm-houses, by creating a necessity for grates, and for chimneys of a better form. In food, there has been no improvement among the labouring classes; the wages of labour will not admit of any: but in the town, and among the small farmers, potatoes have, in some degree, yielded to wheaten bread. The wife of almost every small farmer, carries a wheaten loaf back with her from market; and bread of a second quality is cheap,—the large export of the fine qualities leaving the inferior kinds for home consumption,

Taking a circle of ten or twelve miles round Waterford, the large properties are not so much over-let as the smaller. The estates of the Waterford, the Duncannon, and the Devonshire families, are not understood to be rack-rented; and are all under good management. The property in the worst condition, is that of Mr. Lane Fox, who grants no leases, and whose tenantry are mostly in arrear. I was much amused by learning the kind of presents which this absentee landlord made to his tenants' wives and daughters, on the occasion of a recent visit to his property. Supposing the county of Waterford, and the tastes and wants of its people, to resemble those of New Zealand or California, the good-hearted, but mistaken landlord, visited his estates with pockets full of beads, little mirrors, broaches, and other gew-gaws of a like kind.

While at Waterford, I made frequent excursions into the surrounding country; and sufficiently verified the fact, that the smaller properties were very much over-let. I found 5*l.*, 4*l.* 10*s.*, and even 7*l.* $\frac{1}{2}$ per acre, paid for small farms; and in all these cases, potatoes formed the sole diet of the farmer, with occasionally the back-bone of a pig. This puts me in mind of a place in Waterford, called Arundel-square, where pigs' back bones, and all those parts not exported, are ex-

posed for sale at three-halfpence and two-pence per pound ; and on Saturday evening, this square is filled with eager purchasers. There is no possibility of living, and paying such rents as I have mentioned. Many acknowledged that their arrears never could be paid ; and that they had taken the land at such rents, merely as a refuge against starvation. This is universally the case where land is let by competition. Men who are unable to turn to any business but agriculture, will agree to pay any rent so long as want of employment prevails to so enormous an extent.

There are in Waterford several large public institutions ; particularly, a House of Industry, which appeared to be under good management, though the want of a separate place for lunatics is very objectionable ; and a Mendicity Society, the same in principle as that in Dublin, but exhibiting rather less filth and wretchedness. But the most important institution which I visited, was a Catholic school, at which upwards of seven hundred children were instructed. This is a new establishment, called by some, monk-houses ; and is an association of young men, who dedicate their lives to the instruction of youth, and who call themselves " Brothers of the Christian Schools." It is, in fact, a monastic institution, bound by vows, like other orders ; and although I am far from questioning the motives, either of the founder, Mr. Rice, or of the young men who thus make a sacrifice of themselves, yet I cannot regard favourably an institution under such tuition. I know too much of Catholicism, in other countries, to doubt, that intellectual education will be made very secondary to theological instruction ; and although I am very far from ascribing all, or any large portion of the evils of Ireland to the prevalence of the Roman Catholic faith, yet I would rather not see a system of education extensively pursued, in which the inculcation of popish tenets forms the chief feature. These schools are established in many other towns besides Waterford ; and where I meet with them, I shall not fail to notice them. There are at present ninety members of the

order of " Brothers of the Christian Schools;" and their number is rapidly increasing.

Whiskey drinking prevails to a dreadful extent in Waterford. There are between two and three hundred licensed houses; and it certainly does seem to me, that among the remedial measures necessary for the tranquillity and happiness of Ireland, an alteration in the licensing system is one of the most important. At present, the expense of a license increases with the respectability of the house that demands it, the expense being charged according to the rate; so a premium is thus offered to the lowest houses. This system certainly ought to be changed, and the price of licenses raised: government would lose nothing by this; for, although the number of licensed houses would be reduced, the reduction would be amongst those houses which now encourage illicit trade.

Before leaving Waterford, I visited some of the worst quarters of the town, and was introduced to scenes of most appalling misery. I found three and four families in hovels, lying on straw in different corners, and not a bit of furniture visible; the hovels themselves, situated in the midst of the most horrid and disgusting filth. The heads of the families were out begging potatoes round the country. I noticed among the inferior classes in Waterford—I do not mean the mendicant or destitute poor—too many evidences of idle, slovenly habits,—ragged clothes, which might have been mended; uncombed hair, which might have been in order; and even in the farm-houses I observed, amongst a class who in England would have been neat and tidy, dirty caps and faces, ragged children, and an untidy and slatternly look about things, not warranted by the circumstances of the inmates.

The population of Waterford is about 30,000; of whom 25,000 are Catholics.

There are two watering places, or rather sea-bathing places, in the vicinity of Waterford; Tramore, and Dunmore. I

visited both, though they scarcely repay a visit. The road lies through an uninteresting country, and the places themselves are merely an assemblage of indifferent houses. The sea-beach at Tramore, however, is remarkably fine; and no shopkeeper at Waterford is entitled to hold up his head, who does not spend a few weeks with his family at Tramore.

A more interesting excursion is to Curraghmore, the magnificent domain of the Marquis of Waterford; and in the same neighbourhood there are several other objects of interest; Mayfield, the extensive cotton factory of Messrs. Malcomson; the Besborough Domain; and the town of Carrick-on-Suir. The road from Waterford to Curraghmore, lies through a very pleasant country, which becomes beautiful as the domain is approached. There is the fine broad river; the wide, well cultivated, and well wooded vale; and a magnificent oak forest stretching over an extensive district, as fine a specimen of forest scenery as any I know in England.

Before visiting Curraghmore, I applied for permission to see the neighbouring cotton factory; and in order to get to it, passed through the village of Mayfield, which exhibited every sign of that improvement which might be expected, from the employment afforded by the adjoining manufactory. I found no fewer than 900 persons employed, of whom a large number were of course young persons: the wages of the boys and girls were from 2*s.* 6*d.* to 7*s.* per week; the up-grown persons worked at task-work, and might easily earn 1*l.* The most marked improvement has taken place in the neighbourhood, since the establishment of this manufactory: not in lodging only, but in food also, a great change has taken place; and although high wages, which leave a surplus, are some incentive to intoxication, it is a fact, that not an hour's labour is ever lost in the factory owing to the dissipated habits of those employed in it.

The calico manufactured here, finds an advantageous market, not only in Ireland, but in England also, and is able to compete there with the fabrics of Manchester. It has

been commonly said that Irish manufacturers cannot compete with those of Britain ; but this establishment at Mayfield *does* compete successfully ; and with a sufficiency of capital, and an equally favourable situation, one would imagine that any other might be equally prosperous. The expense of erection is less than in England ; labour is cheaper ; and where there is navigation, the difference in the expense of conveyance to market is but a small item.

I regretted deeply to learn, not from the proprietor of the mill only, but from other sources, that Lord Waterford's family have thrown every obstacle in the way of this establishment ; and that, only the other day, an attempt had been made to take advantage of some manorial rights, and to demolish the mill dams. Pity it is, that the aristocracy should, even by open acts, separate themselves from the interests of the people around them. The enterprising Quaker who has established this factory, has done more for the neighbourhood, than Lord Waterford and all the Beresfords have ever done ; and his lordship's pride ought to be, less in his magnificent domain, and fine stud, than in the comfortable condition of the surrounding peasantry, and in the establishment which has produced it.

It was only by dint of much importunity that I succeeded in gaining admittance to the domain ; but it is well worth the trouble of importuning. It is indeed a magnificent domain ! It contains 4600 acres, and is one of, if not the very largest park in the United Kingdom. The river Clyde—not the noble river of the north ; but a fine full stream nevertheless—traverses the park ; and the timber by the river side is of the most magnificent description, particularly the Norwegian firs, which I have scarcely seen surpassed, even on the banks of the Glommen in “ Old Norway.” The house is not at all worthy of the domain.

The defeat of the Waterford family in the election for the county, was felt by them as a severe blow ! but it has had its uses : more attention is now paid to the interests and com-

forts of the tenantry ; and it is universally admitted, that the property has recently been, and is at present, under excellent management.

From Curraghmore, I proceeded to Carrick-on-Suir, driving through the park, which extends to within about three miles of the town. I know of few finer prospects than the valley of the Suir presents, as it opens upon one, from the heights above Carrick. It is of great extent ; of the utmost fertility ; extremely well wooded, with fine mountains for a back ground ; with a broad navigable river flowing through its centre ; and adorned by many fine domains. I do not think it is equalled by the Vale of Clwyd.

It rained torrents as I descended the heights towards Carrick, which nevertheless looked well, with its old bridge, and ivied castle, and pleasant environs : but, like many continental towns, there was a sad falling off on entering it. I was struck with its deserted, falling-off appearance,—with the number of houses and shops shut up, and windows broken,—and with the very poor, ragged population that lingered about the streets. Nor were these appearances dissipated by farther opportunity of observation : I had not yet visited any town in a poorer condition than this. Carrick-on-Suir, once a town of great prosperity, and large stuff manufacture, and situated in one of the most abundant of districts, appears to be now distinguished—only by the extreme poverty of its population. I found the price of labour here lower than I had yet any where found it. Sixpence to eightpence, without diet (and even for temporary employment), was all that could be obtained ; and, at this price, many hundreds of unemployed labourers could have been got by holding up one's finger. From all quarters I ascertained that a constant deterioration had taken place in the condition of this town, and its neighbourhood, during the last ten years : but, indeed, any one remaining a day at Carrick, and keeping his eyes open, need scarcely put the question “ whether any improvement has taken place ? ” I have already said that the rents on Lord Waterford's, and on the Duncannon properties, are not rack-rents : as much

cannot be said for the smaller properties, in this neighbourhood. Too many are disposed to let land to the highest bidder ; though it must be admitted that, in many parts, it is impossible to carry that disposition into effect, owing to the danger of taking land over another man's head. Carrick, it will be recollected, stands partly in the county of Tipperary. I noticed, amongst other indications of the small means of the lower classes, stalls, set out with a miserable assortment of small bits of meat, the offal of pigs, chiefly ; and much of the meat was in a state unfit to be eaten. These morsels were sold at a penny, three half-pence, and some of them, even as low as one half-penny. Carrick-on-Suir, with all its poverty, may boast of excellent bread ; I never ate better ; and I may take this opportunity of saying, that the bakers' bread generally, in the south of Ireland, is most excellent.

The condition of Carrick might be greatly bettered by improving the navigation of the Suir to Waterford ; so that vessels of a larger tonnage might come up to Carrick, and load there. It is thought that the expense of deepening the channel would not be above 4000*l.* or 5000*l.* ; but, even this trifling capital is not to be had ; because there is a want of enterprise, resulting from a want of public security,—a want that must continue to exist, so long as the mass of the people continue to be without employment.

The population of Carrick-on-Suir—I mean of the town parish—is about 10,000 ; of which number the Protestants amount to about 250.

I returned to Waterford on the Kilkenny side of the Suir, that I might have an opportunity of seeing the Besborough domain, and the scenery on the lower part of the Suir. Three miles on the road to Waterford, Besborough lies. The domain is remarkably well laid out ; and the house, which is well situated, containing some good pictures, certainly well worth a *detour* of a few miles. The village of Piltown, which stands on the road, close to, and, I believe, upon the Besborough property, is evidently a pet village : it is a row of cottages, adorned with evergreens and flowers ; and is

meant to convey, to the passer-by, the idea of snugness and comfort. I trust the noble proprietor has not contented himself with externals: I have no reason to think that he has; on the contrary, the Duncannon family are everywhere well spoken of. At the same time, in a country where I know that more than 4*s.* 6*d.* a week, without diet, cannot be afforded for labour, I look with some distrust upon these beautiful cottages; because I know that internal comforts cannot be in correspondence with external indications.

There are few more beautiful drives in any country, than that from Carrick to Waterford. The road keeps, for the most part, close by the fine broad river, which sweeps through a country of amazing fertility and beauty; and the first view of Waterford, seen through an opening in the rocks that terminate a long reach of the river, is one of the most striking things I recollect to have seen.

I left Waterford, for Kilkenny, by way of Thomastown, travelling by the mail-coach as far as the latter place. There was a fearful congregation of beggars besetting the coach at its starting: and, although such scenes in Ireland are most harrowing to the feelings, it is sometimes impossible to help being amused, by the quick replies and insinuating ways of these sons and daughters of poverty. A commercial traveller chanced to be seated next to the door, and, while the coach waited for the mail-bags, he was assailed by a torrent of importunity. "One little sixpence, your honour! it's but a halfpenny a-piece for the poor crathers." The young man answered, that he had nothing less than half-crowns. "May your honour never have less," said two or three together—wits really jumping. "I dare say," said he, "you would take my coat off my back." "And, if your honour gave it with good will, may be we would," said another.

There is nothing interesting in the country between Waterford and Thomastown. The land is generally under cultivation; but there is also some waste land, susceptible of all improvement; and the land that is under tillage, is by

no means in the condition of which it is susceptible. The road from Waterford to Thomastown, runs the whole way through the county of Kilkenny, which it enters, immediately on crossing the bridge; and Thomastown is situated not very far from the centre of the county. The only bad inn I had yet seen in Ireland, I found at Thomastown.

The following morning by times I was looking about me: and there is indeed a great deal to be seen, in the neighbourhood of Thomastown. The country is extremely pretty; there are a number of fine and extensive domains at no great distance; and several ruins are scattered here and there; the most interesting of which is at Jerpoint, about a mile from the town. Lord Carrick has a pretty park in the neighbourhood; and with Kilfane, the seat of Mr. Power, I was particularly pleased. At Kilfane, I saw some excellent pictures; and amongst them the celebrated portrait of Napoleon, by Gerard. There must, I think, be a drawback on the enjoyment of the finest domain in Ireland.—All that the heart can desire, may be concentrated within its walls; nay even the subject village may own the fostering protection of a kind-hearted resident landlord. But beyond, all this disappears: private wealth and humanity can extend their influence only to a limited distance; and beyond the circle of that influence, rags and beggary are found. I am led to make this observation here, because there are several resident landlords about Thomastown; and because there is but one opinion round the country, as to the worth of Mr. Power, as a resident landlord; and yet I found the condition of the people, *generally*, to be wretched. I met in my walks, wives and mothers begging about the country; carrying their sacks home with a few potatoes, and under their arms a little bundle of sticks,—the only fire-wood they could afford,—picked up by the road side. These were not common mendicants; but as I personally ascertained, were the wives and daughters of labourers, who could find no employment: many had not even the means of obtaining seed to put into their little patches of potato ground. The cabins I found

wretched in the extreme,—many *without even a pig in them.* This, I put in italics; for a new light had now begun to dawn upon me. I used to be shocked at seeing a pig's snout at a cabin door, and looked upon such a spectacle as a proof of wretchedness; but I now began to bless the sight, and to pity more, the poor wretches who possessed no pig. It is true, indeed, that things were still better when a pig-stye was visible; for that gave evidence both of the existence of the pig, and of the superior comfort of its owner: but still, it was always to me a pleasant sight, where, if no pig-stye was visible, I saw him that pays the "rint" walk leisurely in and out of the cabin door, or heard his comfortable grunt within. The greatest example of individual prosperity I observed among the poor in the neighbourhood of Thomastown was, finding three pigs resident in one cabin. It must be recollected, that at the time when these observations were made, labour ought to have been particularly in demand, for it was just the season for potato planting.

I remained longer in Thomastown than the importance of the place itself demanded; but being a central point in Kilkenny, and having introductions in the neighbourhood, I availed myself of my position, to add to my own personal observations, the results of others' experience. I particularly inquired, of persons of all conditions and opinions, as to whether any improvement was discernible in the condition of the people, within the last twelve or fifteen years; and I regret to say, that I heard but one opinion: that a visible deterioration had taken place in the condition of the labouring classes and of the small farmers. How often do we hear the question mooted, Is Ireland an improving country? The reply ought to depend altogether on the meaning we affix to the word improvement. If by improvement, be meant more extended tillage, and improved modes of husbandry,—more commercial importance, evinced in larger exports,—better roads,—better modes of communication,—increase of buildings,—then Ireland is a highly improving country; but, up

to the point at which I have arrived, I have found nothing to warrant the belief, that any improvement has taken place in the condition of the people.

I passed a Sunday in Thomastown; and had of course an opportunity of seeing the population of a Kilkenny country parish, thronging to the Catholic chapel. Every woman wears a cloak, and the hood of every cloak is thrown over the head, unless the cap underneath be an extremely smart one; in which case, the hood is allowed to fall a little back; or if the cap be a none-such, it is altogether exposed. The habit of covering the head appears to be universal. If a girl is not possessed of a cloak, she will borrow the shelter of an apron, or even of a petticoat,—like the women of La Mancha: and in the dress of the men, I remarked also a resemblance to Spanish costume: notwithstanding that the weather was dry and mild, almost every man wore a great coat. The shops were crowded, after mass. All the country people who had money, flocked into the “stores,” to buy some little thing,—the village dealers, to supply their retail trade; and others, to buy a little tea, sugar, or any thing else that domestic use required.

A considerable part of the land about this part of Kilkenny is in the hands of middle-men. I know of a large tract on lease for ninety-nine years, for which the landlord gets but 7*s.* per acre; but which is let by the middle-man at 2*l.* I know of other property let at 6*l.*, for which the landlord receives only 10*s.* I would not, however, from what I have said, be understood to pass any general censure upon middle-men. Many middle-men are excellent landlords; and middle-men, like those from whom they hold, ought to be judged by their individual character. So long, indeed, as the want of capital in Ireland presents insurmountable obstacles to the improvement of land, and the occupation of larger farms, by which a more respectable tenantry would come in the place of middle-men, I scarcely think the utter extinguishment of middle-men would be an advantage: for the

respectable portion of them are, in fact, the only body that at present forms any class separate from the aristocracy, and from the labouring, or at least, the industrious classes.

Some of the best landlords in this neighbourhood are averse from granting leases: and although the reason for this assigned by them—viz., that leases destroy the influence of the landlord,—will scarcely be admitted in these days to be a valid one, there are other reasons which may be alleged in favour of the practice. If leases were not granted, there would be a less competition for land; and consequently, lower rents; and where there is a lease, ejectment is a more easy engine of despotism. Such a system, however, could only be successfully pursued by a landlord of the highest character, and by one who would, besides, lay out some money on a farm, as an earnest of his intentions; but would be quite unsuitable to a country where farmers possessed capital themselves, which they could not be expected to lay out, without a security for enjoying its return.

Before leaving Thomastown, I made an excursion to the village of Innistioge, and to Woodstock, the seat of Mr. and Lady Louisa Tighe; and which enjoys the just reputation of being one of the most beautiful domains in the south of Ireland. I could not but observe the ragged condition of the post-chaise that carried me there: the windows and window frames were broken; the lining in tatters; and in place of a bit of carpet, the bottom of the vehicle was filled with straw; and yet, I believe ten shillings would have put all to rights. The road runs all the way by the river side; and the country, I found varied and beautiful. Innistioge itself is most picturesquely situated; and a quarter of a mile farther, is the entrance to Woodstock.

Having the advantage of an introduction to the family, I had of course, more than the ordinary facilities for seeing the beauties of the place; and I found it every way worthy of its character. I was particularly struck with the extraordinary growth of the laurels, which are here great trees, affording depth and "continuity of shade;" and throughout

the domain, the gifts of nature, which has been most bountiful, have not been thrown away ; for they have all been consigned to the hands of taste.

Much might be effected, if resident Irish landlords would more identify themselves with the people. This, the proprietors of Woodstock have done ; and as one proof of the influence of character, I may mention, that the Catholic children of the village attend, without exception, the school under the superintendence of Lady Louisa Tighe ; and which is taught by a Protestant. It is not enough that landlords be resident : absenteeism would be imperfectly cured, unless they were philanthropic also.

CHAPTER IV.

Journey to Kilkenny—Our Ignorance respecting Irish Towns—The Antiquities of Kilkenny—Its Cathedral and Round Tower—Picturesque Ruins—the Castle—Condition of the People—Kilkenny Manufactures, and Misstatements—The Repeal Question—Pigs and dung-heaps—Kilkenny "Boys"—The Town of Callen, and its Proprietor, Lord Clifden—Some facts and Opinions—The Aristocracy of Ireland—Journey to Thurles—Freshford and Johnstown—The Bog of Allen—Thurles, and its inhabitants—The Ruins of Holy Cross—Journey to Cashel—Cashel, and the Rock of Cashel—The Archbishop—his Gardens—Another Round Tower—Market-day in Cashel—Pig-selling and buying, and Irish Bargaining—Miserable Objects in Cashel—Country between Cashel and Tipperary—Outrage and its Origin—Tithes—Competition for Land—Abduction—The Town of Tipperary, and Condition of the People—Lord Stanley's Estates—Correction of an Error.

KILKENNY lies nine miles from Thomastown, and I hired a car to carry me thither to breakfast. In paying the hire of the car, before starting, I was obliged to request change of a 5*l.* note. The town was ransacked for five small notes in vain. Nobody had so much money: at length some one thought of the parish priest, and the thing was done. A cultivated, but not an interesting country, lies between Thomastown and Kilkenny; but a mile or two before entering the city, the country improves, and exhibits the appearances which usually indicate the approach to a place of some consequence. The entrance to Kilkenny is extremely imposing: one traverses no miserable suburb; but passes at once into a broad

street, by a still broader highway, adorned by a double row of lofty trees, over which appear the towers of Kilkenny Castle, the residence of the Ormonde family.

Judging by myself, our ignorance about the second and third-rate Irish towns is extreme. There are only some few we ever hear of. Leaving Cork, Waterford, Limerick, and Belfast out of the list, less I think is known of the other towns, unless by the gentlemen of the army, than of the same class of towns on the continent. Before the introduction of the Reform Bill, which somewhat enlightened us as to the size of towns, less was known of the Irish towns than now; but even yet, our ideas of Kilkenny, Clonmel, Athlone, Mullingar, Mallow, Fermoy, Cashel, Thurles, Tipperary, Ennis, Galway, Sligo, and a host of others, are of the vaguest description.

I found the city of Kilkenny, a large well-built, beautifully situated, and very interesting town. In fact, I scarcely know any town more interesting or more picturesque. There are many streets in Kilkenny, though only one principal one, where the best shops are situated; and although Kilkenny is not what it has been, it is still a little capital for this part of Ireland, and supplies both the surrounding gentry and the country dealers.

Kilkenny is full of interesting objects, and remains. In my first walk through the town, I saw for the first time, in perfection, one of the "round towers." It is close to, and almost forms a part of the cathedral, a large ancient pile, surrounded by venerable trees. One must be an antiquarian, in order to be a thorough enthusiast in round towers; at the same time, the singular form, and great height, and dark hue, and known antiquity, and mystery too, attached to these pillars, must be striking to any one, however little of an antiquary. The dusky antiquity of the cathedral, and its mysterious companion—unknown centuries older than all around it—were in striking contrast with the young green of the sycamore and beech trees, which were covered with their spring buds. The cathedral is inferior in size only to St. Patrick's, and

Christ Church in Dublin ; and the antiquarian will find inside, a good deal that is worthy of his attention, particularly the stone chair of St. Kievan, who is said to have preceded St. Patrick by twenty or thirty years, in his holy mission to christianize Ireland. There are also several sepulchral honours erected to the memory of members of the Butler family.

Nor are these the only interesting remains in Kilkenny : the ruins of the Franciscan Abbey exhibit some fine traces of the past : and the Dominican, or Black Abbey, still retains in good preservation its tower, some of the aisles, and other less perfect relics of its ancient perfections : another, the Augustinian monastery, constructed on a light and beautiful design, has been attempted to be converted into a place of worship, and although spoiled, yet shows some fine remains. But above all, the view from the uppermost of the bridges over the Nore is interesting ; for it comprises all these objects—the town itself, interspersed with trees and with the spires of the churches ; the cathedral, and its tall, dark companion ; the ruins of the two abbeys ; the river, and lower bridge ; and, bounding the prospect in that direction, that fine structure, Kilkenny Castle,—its gothic towers rising above the surrounding wood. This baronial castle is full of historic associations. It was built by Strongbow, in the twelfth century ; and two centuries afterwards came into the possession of the Earl of Ormonde, in whose family it has remained ever since. Little of the ancient edifice remains ; and the present marquis is almost rebuilding it, preserving only the ancient towers. The family, to whom I carried letters of introduction, being unfortunately absent, I had only the privileges of a stranger in my visit to the castle.

But let me leave externals, and ask, in what state are the people of Kilkenny ? I wish I could have contemplated their situation, with as much complacency and pleasure as I did the city itself, and the natural beauties that surround it : but I am compelled to say, that I found the most wide-

spread, and most aggravated misery. The population of Kilkenny is about 25,000; and I am enabled to state, after the most anxious inquiry, and close personal observation, that there were, at the time I visited Kilkenny, upwards of 2000 persons totally without employment. It chanced that I was at Kilkenny just after the debate on the repeal question; in which the prosperity of Ireland was illustrated, by reference to that of Kilkenny, of whose prosperous manufactures honourable mention was made, condescending even upon the number of water-wheels at work, which were said to be eleven in number; and the carpet manufactory, too, was spoken of in such terms, that it was said to be owing to its success, that the weavers of Kidderminster had petitioned for repeal. I visited these prosperous factories, immediately after the account I have mentioned was received; the principal of these factories used to support two hundred men with their families; it was at eleven o'clock, a fair working hour, that I visited these mills, and how many men did I find at work? **ONE MAN!** And how many of the eleven wheels did I find going?—**ONE;** and that one, not for the purpose of driving machinery, but to prevent it from rotting. In place of finding men occupied, I saw them in scores, like spectres, walking about, and lying about the mill. I saw immense piles of goods completed, but for which there was no sale;—I saw piles of cloth at 2s. a yard, with which a man might clothe himself from head to foot for 10s.; but there were no buyers: the poor of Kilkenny are clothed from Monmouth-street:—I saw heaps of blankets, enough to furnish every cabin in the county; and I saw every loom idle. As for the carpets which had excited the jealousy and fears of Kidderminster, not one had been made for seven months; it was but an experiment, and had utterly failed: and just to convey some idea of the destitution of these people—when an order recently arrived, for the manufacture of as many blankets for the police, as would have kept the men at work a few weeks, bonfires were lighted about the country—not bonfires to communicate insurrection, but to evince joy, that a few

starving men were about to earn bread to support their families. I speak warmly on this subject : but how can I speak otherwise than with warmth ? Surely I need not say that I do not accuse any one of false invention, or wilful misrepresentation : but I accuse some one of having furnished to the advocates of the Union, *lies*, in place of truth. Their views require no such props : and I, who am no repealer, regret that an argument should be thus furnished to the repealers. The supporters of the Union advance as an argument against the repeal of the Union, the prosperity of Ireland ; and Kilkenny is quoted as an illustration of that prosperity. The statement turned out to be utterly false : and thus, the repealers boast, that they have a stronger case.

Having mentioned repeal, I may state, that as far as I have yet gone through the south of Ireland, I have found the whole of the lower, and a great proportion of the middle classes, repealers. By the middle classes, I mean the shopkeepers and farmers : I found Protestants of that class, who are indeed few in number, quite as much repealers as Catholics. I have generally found, however, a readiness to admit, that if employment were provided for the people, and any measure devised, which should have the effect of enticing, or forcing back absentees, repeal would lose its value.

Independently of the pauperism occasioned by the non-prosperous condition of the manufactures of Kilkenny, the whole working population I found in a miserable condition : hundreds subsisting on the chance contributions, which were levied on the farmers round the country ; and hundreds more, subsisting at the very lowest point at which life can be sustained. The suburbs I found more wretched than any I had yet seen in any town ; pigs were by no means a universal possession ; and the chief wealth of the poor, seemed to be dung-heaps before their door. I do not speak in jest—the dung-heap insures a certain quantum of subsistence, in this way : The con-acre system prevails here : and it is usual for the possessor of the land, to let it out in small patches, rent free for one season, on condition of the patch being manured

by the person who takes it. Thus a poor man may insure to his family the produce, for a season, of as much land as he is able to put a sufficiency of manure into; so that I had now advanced a step farther, and was not only gratified by seeing a pig in a cabin, but also by the spectacle of a large dung-heap close to the door.

I ought not to have omitted to state, when speaking of the unprosperous state of the manufactures of Kilkenny, and of the assertion to the contrary; that while I write this, I have before me the original minute of a meeting held on the 6th of February, for the purpose of alleviating the condition of the poor, in which the population is spoken of as "wholly unemployed,"—so that the destitution of the people had existed months before the assertion as to the flourishing state of Kilkenny. The minute I allude to, is signed by the Mayor, by Dr. Kinsella, the Roman Catholic Bishop, and by the Protestant Dean, the Honourable and Rev. Joseph Bourke.

I spent part of a day on a race-ground, about four miles from Kilkenny, where some steeple races took place, and where a large concourse of persons was assembled. I was particularly struck with the difference in the display of luxuries, at an Irish and an English merry-making. Ginger-bread and other dainties, are exhibited at a race or fair in England; here, I observed carts filled with good common household bread. This was deemed a luxury.

This being an assemblage of "Kilkenny boys," who, next to Tipperary boys, bear the best fighting character—I thought to have had it to say, "it's there where one'll see the fightin' that'll do his heart good;" but several things prevented this exhibition. There was but little money among the lower orders, to buy whiskey; and torrents of rain had the effect of thinning the field. I saw plenty of "boys" with their shillelahs; but the fighting was only desultory. There were abundance of booths, and Irish pipes, and Irish jigs; and "boys" who appeared to have hired a fiddler for their own exclusive use, dancing a *pas seul* within a circle of admirers.

I must not omit to make mention of the beautiful black

marble of Kilkenny, and of the better known "Kilkenny coal." The marble quarry is situated about a mile from the city; and there is a sawing and polishing mill also. The marble is extremely beautiful: it has a black ground, curiously variegated with madrepora, bivalve, and other organic impressions, and is used for chimney-pieces all over this part of the country. Kilkenny coal is well known by its qualities; the chief of which are, that it does not flame, or emit any smoke. Its sulphureous exhalation, however, renders it utterly unfit for domestic use.

I had heard, even in England, of the wretched condition of a town in the county of Kilkenny, called Callen; and finding that this town was but eight miles from Kilkenny, I devoted a day to Callen. I never travelled through a more pleasing and smiling country, than that which lies between Kilkenny and Callen; and I never entered a town reflecting so much disgrace upon the owner of it, as this. In so execrable a condition are the streets of this town, that the mail-coach, in passing through it, is allowed twelve minutes extra; an indulgence which can surprise no one who drives, or rather attempts to drive through the street; for no one who has the use of his limbs, would consent to be driven. And yet, will it be credited, that a toll is levied on the entrance into the town of every article of consumption; and that not one shilling of the money so received, is laid out for the benefit of the town. The potatoes, coal, butter-milk, with which the poor wretches who inhabit this place supply their necessities, are subject to a toll, which used to produce 250*l.* per annum; but which having been resisted by some spirited and prying person, who questioned the right of toll, the receipts have been since considerably diminished. It was with some difficulty that I obtained a sight of the table of tolls; but I insisted on my right to see it; and satisfied myself, that potatoes and butter-milk, the food of the poor, pay a toll to Lord Clifden, who, from a revenue of about 10 or 12,000*l.* per annum, which he draws out of this county—a considerable part from

the immediate neighbourhood—lays out not one farthing for the benefit of his people.

I had not yet seen in Ireland, any town in so wretched a condition as this. I arrived in it very early in the morning; and having been promised breakfast at a grocer's shop (for there is no inn in Callen), I walked through the outskirts of the town, and round a little common which lies close to it, and there I saw the people crawling out of their hovels,—they and their hovels not one shade better than I have seen in the sierras of Granada, where the people live in holes excavated in the banks. Their cabins were mere holes, with nothing within them (I speak of two which I entered) excepting a little straw, and one or two broken stools. And all the other outskirts of the town, are in nearly a similar condition:—ranges of hovels, without a ray of comfort or a trace of civilization about them: and people either in a state of actual starvation, or barely keeping body and soul together. All this I saw, and cannot be deceived; and from the inquiries which I made of intelligent persons, the Protestant clergyman among the number, I may state, that in this town, containing between four and five thousand inhabitants, at least one thousand are without regular employment; six or seven hundred entirely destitute; and that there are upwards of two hundred actual mendicants in the town—persons incapable of work. Is there any one so blind as to contend, that this is a state of things which ought to continue; and that an absentee nobleman should be permitted to draw, without deduction for the support of the infirm poor, the splendid income which he wrings out of a people left to starvation or crime? An attempt was made by some philanthropic persons, to have the common enclosed and cultivated, which would have given some employment; but the project was unsuccessful. The great resisted it;—and again, will any one say, that Lord Clifden, or others situated like his lordship, ought not to be *forced* to consent to a proposal tending to give employment to those of whom his own rack-rents and eject-

ments have made paupers? Let any one who desires to see a specimen of an absentee town, visit Callen. And Lord Clifden is the more reprehensible, since he occasionally visits the country, and is not ignorant of its condition. It is true, that his lordship drives as rapidly through his town as the state of the street will admit; but it is said, that upon one occasion, the carriage broke down; and that this patriotic and tender-hearted nobleman, was forced to hear the execrations of the crowd of naked and starving wretches who thronged around him.

Nor is the country around Callen fortunate in its other landlords. The land of Lord Dysart, another large proprietor, is frightfully rack-rented. Land, at a distance from any market, is let at 4*l.* and 4*l.* 10*s.* per acre: and I know of five acres let at a rent, the whole produce of which would barely pay the rent of one acre. The Marquis of Ormonde is another proprietor; but his land is not so much over-set; and the general opinion appears to be, that he is anxious to do right.

I greatly fear that an angry feeling towards the lower classes, has been engendered amongst the aristocracy, by the result of the last elections, when old members were unseated, and repealers brought in. Some have been irritated by the conduct of their tenantry; and others have been hurt by what they conceive to be ingratitude. In some instances, there has been ingratitude, no doubt; and that some irritation should have been produced, is only natural; but these are feelings which ought to be conquered. As a body, the landlords of Ireland have not been towards their tenantry what they ought to have been; and have long stood in need of much broader "hints" than those which *Blackwood* addressed to the aristocracy of England: and if, as the gentry of Ireland generally assert, the people were incited by their priests,—then it is unreasonable that anger should be excited against those whom they imagine to have been deluded. But I confess, that from all I have heard and seen, I have my doubts whether it be in most cases the priests that incite the

people, or whether it be not rather the people that take the lead. I believe it will be admitted by all who have had the best opportunities of judging, that unless the instigations of the priest fall in with the wishes of the people, his influence is powerless; and instances have actually occurred, in which a priest, after having opposed himself to O'Connell and the repeal candidate, was scoffed at by his flock, and refused his accustomed dues. And for my own part, I am not at all surprised that a people suffering all the extremities of human privation, should catch at straws; and that Mr. O'Connell should find it an easy matter to raise a cry in favour of any thing which he asserts to be for the benefit of the people; so that on no ground are the aristocracy justified in visiting upon the people, the errors which have originated in ignorance, or delusion.

I walked back to Kilkenny from Callen in the evening, without any fear of robbery, in a country where half the people are starving. Robbery, singular to tell, is a crime of unfrequent occurrence; and I look upon it, that a traveller is in less danger on the highways of Ireland, than in any other part of the British dominions.

Before leaving Kilkenny, I inquired the prices of provisions, and found beef to be four-pence, mutton sixpence, bacon and pork two-pence, fowls 1s. a couple. A turkey in the season costs 2s. 6d., a goose 1s. 10d. The club-house, or Hibernian Hotel, Kilkenny, is one of the very best I ever found in any country, London not excepted; and in order that the traveller may have some idea of the expenses of travelling in the south of Ireland, I shall state the prices of this hotel, which are much the same as those charged elsewhere. Accommodation, which consisted of a large and excellent bed-room and a well furnished private sitting-room fronting the street, 2s. Dinner, 2s. 6d.; tea, 1s. 1d.; breakfast, 1s. 8d. Wine and foreign spirits, the same price as in England; but the wine is generally better. A glass of whiskey-punch, five pence. These prices vary but little over the south.

My object now was, to traverse the county of Tipperary,

passing through that part of Kilkenny county which I had not yet seen. I accordingly left Kilkenny, on Bianconi's car, for Thurles, in the north of Tipperary.

A charming country lies between Kilkenny and Freshford, the first town on the road. The views, looking back on Kilkenny, are very striking; and the banks of the Nore, near to which our road lay, are finely wooded, and are adorned by several handsome country seats. I was every where delighted with the magnificent thorns, which, both in the hedges by the way side, and as single trees in the neighbouring parks, were entirely covered with their white, pink, and fragrant blossoms. Freshford is a poor little place; but I saw multitudes of pigs, and mountains of manure about the doors. Driving out of Freshford, I was surprised to see so much manure lying uncollected on the high-road. In England it would have been all scraped up; and it is from such little things as this, that one is forced to admit the less industrious habits of the people; and that, bad as their condition is, they do not make the best of it.

From Freshford to Johnstown, where we stopped to breakfast, the country is less interesting; the fields were so completely covered with daisies, that they appeared as if spread over with lime; and I observed a greater quantity of pasture land than I had usually seen. Beyond Johnstown to Urlingford, three miles farther, the country gets poorer; and Urlingford stands almost on the skirts of the Bog of Allen,—a branch of which we soon after entered.

Of all the bogs of Ireland, we hear most in England of the Bog of Allen; the reason of which is, that it is the largest,—extending through a great part of the centre of Ireland; and although separated and intersected by belts of arable land, by gravel hills, and by reclaimed portions of land, is, with all its branches, one bog—the Bog of Allen. The branch which we crossed, extended about twelve miles to the left; and to the right it broke into several branches, extending to a much greater distance. It presented a dreary

expanse of dark brown herbage, here and there broken by heaps of dry turf; here and there too, little patches had been reclaimed; and wherever there was an elevation, it was covered with the finest green, agreeably relieving the monotony of the reddish brown level around. The houses erected on the skirts of the bog, were wretched in the extreme, and the people in the lowest scale of humanity.

I am not competent to write on the reclamation of the bogs of Ireland; but I believe it has been fearlessly asserted, by those fully competent to give a sound opinion, that a very large part of these bogs is reclaimable, at an expense of 7l. per acre. Twenty millions have lately been given to the West Indian planters; some say to extinguish a name, and make good a theory. At all events it is undeniable, that the condition of the Irish poor is immeasurably worse than that of the West India slave: and if but seven millions were thrown upon the bogs of Ireland, a million of acres might be reclaimed; and employment and food afforded to the hundreds of thousands who now, for want of employment and bread, disorganize the country, force absenteeism, tax the people of England for the preservation of law and order, and peril the very existence of the empire.

We were now in the county of Tipperary, which in approaching Thurles, is an uninteresting country. Thurles cuts some figure at a distance, owing to the new and very handsome Roman Catholic chapel, and the unfinished Roman Catholic college. The town stands on a wide, scantily wooded, and uninteresting plain. It contains about eight thousand inhabitants, and is a tolerably prosperous town; for having no larger town nearer to it than forty or fifty miles, it supplies an extensive interior district, and is besides an important market for country produce. There are no fewer than fifteen fairs, and two weekly markets, held at Thurles. I saw scarcely any beggars in this place; and the cabins in the outskirts were not of the worst kind. There are two nunneries in this town; in one of them there are twenty nuns

and sixty boarders. I also found here, one of the schools belonging to the Roman Catholic institution of which I have already spoken.

Besides the absence of beggars, I saw several other indications of an improving town. I observed no shops to be let, and I saw several houses in course of being built. Land is high let about Thurles, but it is good land; and farmers paying 3*l.*, 4*l.*, 5*l.*, and even more per acre, admitted that they could live, and pay their rents, unless in unfavourable seasons. When we speak of land in Ireland being high set, we speak of course with reference to the capital and skill brought to bear upon it. If more skill or capital were, or could be thrown upon much of the land in Ireland, it could well bear the rents now exacted; and if the means of communication were multiplied and improved; and if by the more general employment of the people, agitation were, as it necessarily would be, diminished, absenteeism checked, and capital attracted to Ireland, there can be no doubt that the present just complaint of high rents would be less frequent; because the skill and capital thrown upon the land, would increase its value to the occupier. And it need scarcely be added, that the employment of the agricultural population, and the investment of capital in other speculations, would operate in diminishing the rent of land, by diminishing the competition for it.

I found the price of labour a shade higher in this part of Tipperary than in Kilkenny: as much as eight-pence was given with diet, and one shilling without diet: but I do not speak of constant employment; and it must not be forgotten, that this was the season of potato planting. Prices of provisions here, I found precisely the same as at Kilkenny.

A fire broke out in Thurles, the night before I left it, and several houses were consumed. An immense concourse of persons was present; and there was more noise than work; and strange to tell, the town was unprovided with a fire-engine. The lower orders of Irish have much feeling for each other. It a rare thing to hear an angry, or con-

temptuous expression, addressed to any one who is poor; commiseration of the destitute condition of others, is largely mingled in their complaints of their own poverty; and it is a fact, that they are most exemplary in the care which they take of their destitute relatives, and in the sacrifices which they willingly make for them. In the crowds which thronged the streets of Thurles, during the conflagration, loud and general were the lamentations for the poor "crathurs" who lost their little all.

About three miles from Thurles, is to be seen one of the finest abbey remains in Ireland. It is called Holy Cross; and as it lay on my road to Cashel, the next point at which I purposed halting, I left Thurles in the afternoon, to be taken up by the car to Cashel in the morning, and spent the evening at Holy Cross, in and about the ruins. They are very extensive: and even to one not an antiquarian, highly interesting, both from the general outline of the ruins, their towers, chapels, and arches; and from the beauty of some of the architectural remains within, particularly two monumental relics which adorn the choir—one conjectured to be intended as a receptacle for the fragment of the true cross, originally presented to this abbey; the other—very beautiful in its design—supposed to be a mausoleum of one of the Ormonde family.

Next morning I proceeded on my journey. From Holy Cross to Cashel, I passed through as fine and fertile a country as it has ever been my fortune to see; thickly peopled, and abounding in hamlets and cottages. The celebrated rock of Cashel, crowned with its magnificent ruins, is seen many miles distant; but the city (for Cashel is a city) is not seen until one is just entering it.

Cashel is rather a pretty town: the principal street is wide and well built; but the place is far from being in a flourishing condition. It was formerly a place of much resort, and consequent prosperity; but it is now almost entirely an absentee town; and I found every thing extremely dull, and things getting daily worse. Wages were here only eight-

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pence a day without diet, and numbers were altogether without employment. The population of Cashel is, at present, about 7000; and the number of Protestant communicants about 150. I was sorry to hear bad accounts of the Protestant archbishop. I found him universally disliked, even by those dependent upon him, and of the same religious persuasion. He does no good; and by all accounts, is a close, hard man, in every sense far overpaid by 7 or 8,000*l.* a year which he enjoys. He has the disadvantage, indeed, of being compared with his predecessor, whom all, Protestant and Catholic, unite in praising.

Notwithstanding the just dislike which I imbibed of this high dignitary, I did not deny myself the enjoyment of his lordship's gardens, in which I spent a charming morning. All that can delight the senses, is here. Parterres of lovely flowers, and rare shrubs; velvet lawns; secluded walks rich in odours; and above the fine screen of holly and laburnum, and lilac, and copper-beech, and laurel, towers the rock, and the magnificent ruin that covers it. There is a private way through his lordship's grounds, communicating with the rock; in order that, unobserved by his numerous flock, he may retire to this solemn spot, and meditate on the insufficiency of earthly enjoyments. The archbishop has a palace, as well as a garden: but it is reported that he means to reside in Waterford in future, where his flock will be larger, and his range of usefulness, therefore, more extensive.

The rock of Cashel is generally considered to be the finest assemblage of ruins which Ireland contains. The height itself, on which the ruins stand, is a rocky elevation; covered however with the most beautiful grass, rising abruptly out of the plain, and standing close to the town. The ruins cover the greater part of the elevation; and, whether to the antiquary, or to the mere lover of the curious and the picturesque, exhibit in their varied architecture, and various antiquity—in their Saxon arches, and Norman arches—and in the "round tower," which is also a part of them, one of the most interesting objects of contemplation

that is anywhere to be found. The round tower, though forming a part of these ruins, differs from all that surrounds it; not merely in its form, but even in the material of which it is built—the other ruins being of limestone, but freestone being the material of the tower.

The view from the summit of these ruins, or even from the elevation on which they stand, is equally beautiful and extensive. The whole county of Tipperary is spread out below—one beautifully variegated plain, richly cultivated, and bounded by the Galtee and other mountain ranges; while immediately below, the beautiful pleasure grounds of the bishop—their lawns, parterres, borders, clumps, and shrubberies, in all their varied livery of green, lie like a piece of mosaic work.

The second day I spent at Cashel, was market day; and among other sights, I was greatly amused by the country people driving bargains for pigs. A man, a pig dealer, would come to a countryman who held a pig by a string. "How much do you ask?"—"28s." the answer might be. "Hold out your hand," says the buyer; and the proprietor of the pig holds out his hand accordingly: the buyer places a penny in it, and then strikes it with a force that might break the back of an ox: "Will ye take 20s.?" The other shakes his head—"Ask 24s. and see if I'll give it ye," says the pig-merchant. The owner again shakes his head. It is probable that by this time, some one among the bystanders—for there is always a circle formed round a bargain-making,—endeavours to accommodate matters; for it is another instance of the kindly feeling towards each other, that all around are anxious that the bargain should be concluded. Again, the merchant says, "Hold out your hand," and again a tremendous blow is struck, and a new offer made, till at last they come within a shilling perhaps of each other's terms; when the bargain is struck; and the shilling about which they differed, and probably two or three others, are spent in whiskey punch "screeching hot."

Sitting in the evening at the window of the inn, I saw a

sight such as I never saw in any other part of the world—a lad twelve years of age, and upwards, naked in the street. I say naked: I do not mean without a rag: but I mean so entirely in rags, that he might as well have been stark naked. All he had on him was a jacket, and a few tatters of a shirt, hanging in strips here and there. Public decency would not permit such a sight in England; and viewing such a spectacle, one is tempted to ask, is there no clergyman, no magistrate, no decent man in Cashel, who, for the sake of sheer modesty, would throw a pair of trowsers to the ragamuffin?

When I was at Cashel, potatoes had become so dear, that bread was partly substituted for them by the poor. A baker's shop chanced to be situated precisely opposite to the inn; and I saw very many children buy a halfpenny worth of bread, and divide it into two or three pieces, for the supper of as many. Neither here, nor in many other parts of Ireland, is bread sold by weight. There are loaves at 3d., 4d., &c.: and these are cut into two or four pieces. The large loaves are not weighed; and as the size of the loaf is no criterion of the quantity of flower put into it, great imposition is doubtless practised.

I now left Cashel, for the town of Tipperary. Tipperary county, with the exception, I believe, of some parts of Limerick, is considered to contain the finest land in Ireland; and, certainly, nothing can exceed the fertility and abundance which are spread over the fields. Golden Bridge, which lies about four miles on the Tipperary road, from Cashel, is reputed to be one of the most disturbed spots in Ireland; and here have been perpetrated some of those inhuman acts at which humanity shudders. It was here that the Rev. Mr. Whitty was barbarously murdered; and here, where, in open day, two men, with blunderbusses, entered a field, where many were at work, and asked for Jack Sullivan; and, having found the individual they were in search of, placed him on his knees—shot him stone dead, and walked away unmolested.

This, I think, is the first time I have mentioned the subject of outrage. I might have mentioned it twenty times, if I had given ear to all the stories and reports which are circulated. That there is much exaggeration, no one who travels through Ireland, and inquires upon the spot, can doubt : but that frightful examples of ferocity, hatred, and revenge have occurred, and do occasionally occur, is but too certain : and, from every respectable quarter, I heard but one opinion as to the necessity of a Coercion Bill. Almost every outrage and murder that has disgraced Ireland, has arisen out of one of two causes—either competition for land, or tithes ; and, until means be found for reducing the former, and till the latter be finally and justly settled, it will be in the power of any restless, wrongheaded, or interested man to agitate Ireland. Competition for land can only be diminished by employing the people ; but I greatly fear, that no scrutiny, however strict and impartial, into the revenues of the Protestant church, and that even no application of the surplus, will be satisfactory to the land occupiers of Ireland. Here, as every where else in the south, I heard the strongest objections to tithe in any shape ; and a curious instance came to my knowledge, of the determination of farmers to get rid of tithe. A farmer agreed to pay 30s. an acre for a certain quantity of land ; the landlord being bound to pay tithe and all other dues. On rent day the tenant arrives, and, before paying his rent, asks what tithe the landlord pays ? “ Why do you wish to know that,” says the landlord, “ what is it to you what tithe I pay ? you pay me 30s., and I take tithe and every burden off your hand.” “ I know that,” says the farmer ; “ but I’ll not only not pay tithe myself, but your honour sha’n’t pay it either.” The tenant offered the landlord his rent, deducting whatever tithe he, the landlord, paid ; and the rent is, at this moment, unpaid.

I said, that all acts of outrage, or atrocity, were to be traced to competition for land, or the aversion to tithes. There are, however, in this county of Tipperary, some few other causes of less frequent occurrence. Abduction is one

of these; and this is always a cause of deadly feud: and there are also factions, which are of long standing—existing without any intelligible cause; but which are even inheritances: and although these are not the origin of deliberate murder, they are the occasion of those fights, which almost invariably take place at fairs, when persons of different factions meet; and which too often terminate in bloodshed.

All the way to Tipperary, the same rich country is seen on both sides of the road; and about half way, I passed by the fine domain and seat of the late Lord Landaff; which I did not stop to walk over; but which, next to the domain of the Marquis of Waterford, is said to contain the greatest quantity of valuable timber.

Tipperary is most agreeably situated, in a fine undulating, smiling country; and within a few miles of a beautiful range of hills, which divides the counties of Tipperary and Limerick. Tipperary, though inconsiderable in size, to bear the name of the county, is rather a flourishing town; and is what a mercantile traveller would call, "a good little town." There is no town westward, nearer than Limerick; and there is consequently a busy retail trade, the result of country wants. There is also a good weekly market, which makes Tipperary the depôt of agricultural produce, for a range of twelve or fifteen miles round. Owing to the low price of agricultural produce, the retail trade was somewhat dull when I visited Tipperary; but it was supposed it would revive the ensuing winter. Notwithstanding the better circumstances of the tradesmen, the condition of the labouring classes I found little better than elsewhere. Not so large a proportion of the people were out of employment here as in some other places; but wages were only eight-pence a day, without diet; and I ascertained that there is no constant employment for all, or any thing approaching to all, the population. I certainly observed fewer ragged people, and fewer beggars, in Tipperary, than in Cashel, and many other towns; but in searching the suburbs, I found many cabins wretched enough, and enormous rents paid for them. Some

paid 4*l.*, none less than 2*l.* 10*s.*, and the average rent might be 3*l.*

The con-acre system is very general in the neighbourhood of Tipperary, and very popular. They looked upon it as the only refuge which many a man had against starvation. The rents paid, were at the rate of from 10*l.* to 12*l.* an acre; and a guinea per quarter was generally paid in advance. Here, therefore, the system is on a more unfavourable footing for the renter of the con-acre; for before he can avail himself of it, he must be possessed of a little capital; and the farmer has security against his tenant relinquishing his possession.

The number of resident gentry about Tipperary is considerable; though some of the largest proprietors are absent,—I will not say absentees,—for that, I think, is not the term to apply to those who have their chief possessions in England. All that can be expected from such individuals, is to have proper resident agents; and occasionally to visit their properties. Many absentee properties are quite as well managed, as if the proprietors were resident: and as one example of this, I may name the large estates of Lord Stanley, in this neighbourhood. I found only one opinion as to the excellent management of these estates;—rents are moderate, and the tenantry well treated; and from my own observation, I can speak to the generally comfortable condition of things upon this property. A reading society, of which I believe the agent upon the property is librarian, has been instituted for the benefit of Lord Stanley's tenantry; and the project I understood to be perfectly successful.

I found every thing perfectly quiet and orderly in the neighbourhood of Tipperary. The very name forces to our recollection, images of shillelahs, and broken heads, and turbulence of every kind; and I found it readily admitted, that the fighting propensities of the Tipperary boys are somewhat remarkable. I recollect dining in Dublin, with a large party, at which were present some grand jurors of what are called the disturbed counties; and the conversation turning upon employment for the poor, as the means of

lessening agitation, it was objected that in the counties of Tipperary and Kilkenny, where it was asserted there is the most employment for the people, there is also the most disturbance. In the first place, it is utterly false, that in these counties there is employment for the people; the fact rather is, that the more frequent disturbance in Tipperary than elsewhere, arises rather from the opposite cause,—as it is natural it should. The soil is so fine in this county, that less industry is required, in order to obtain a return for land; and the holders of small bits of land, have, therefore, more time upon their hands. Another reason is, that the population is more concentrated: and it may also be stated, that illicit whiskey—one fruitful source of outrage—is cheaper here than elsewhere, owing to the low price of grain in this grain county; which has unfortunately induced producers of grain to turn their attention to illicit distillation, by which they can make larger profits than in the grain market.

The population of the town of Tipperary is about 8000: of whom about 700 are Protestants.

CHAPTER V.

Journey to Clonmel—Cahir, and its beautiful neighbourhood—Lord Glengall—The Catholic Chapel, and a Scene—The Priesthood—Condition of the People—Scenery of the *Suir*—Fine Gardens—Cahir Fair—Weddings in this part—Road to Clonmel—Prosperity of the Town—Trade of Clonmel—Corn Mills in England and in Ireland—Mr. Bianconi—Employment of Labour—Religious Sects—General Indications of prosperity—Libraries—Public Institutions—State of Society in the Southern Counties—Environs of Clonmel—Journey to Mitchelstown.

I LEFT Tipperary, for Cahir and Clonmel, the evening following my arrival.

It is impossible to conceive any drive more beautiful than this. The Galtee range of mountains lay to the right, at but a short distance; and these, under a sinking sun, exhibited the most beautiful diversities of light and shade. The nearer heights, sometimes close to the road, were covered with thriving plantations; magnificent parks, with the finest timber scattered over them, were passed by in succession; and finer crops of grain, or more beautiful grass, eye never rested on.

Cahir, where I arrived a little after sunset, is charmingly situated; I am not sure that I do not prefer its picturesque beauties to those of Avoca. There is every constituent of the picturesque—wood, a fine river, a bridge, ivied ruins,

and a magnificent back-ground of mountains. The view, from the windows of the inn, embraces all these. The fine domain of Lord Glengall commences just at the back of the town; and with the Suir running through the centre of it, abounds in scenes of beauty. Lord Glengall has not of late had much in his power; but great expectations have been formed, from his lordship's late alliance, and from his avowed intention of residing on his property. The land on this property is not considered to be much over-let. It averages, to the actual possessors, about 40s.; and is generally excellent land. Lord Glengall himself does not receive any thing like this average, a great part of the estate being in the hands of middle-men.

The town of Cahir lies on the side of a hill; and is adorned by two very pretty spires; one, belonging to the new Protestant Church, a handsome little edifice; the other, appertaining to the Catholic chapel, a grander and far larger edifice. A considerable number of the most recently erected Catholic chapels have spires, which, in height and architecture, quite eclipse those of the churches of the Establishment.

I am sorry to be obliged, in this place, to record a fact, to which I could not have given credit on any evidence, less conclusive than that of my own eyes. The Roman Catholic chapel is newly erected, and is yet unfinished: and I was told, that the anxiety to obtain funds for its completion, gave rise to the enactment of some curious scenes at the door. I went there, about ten o'clock; and I certainly did witness a scene of a most singular kind. The gates were shut, and four men stood by. One had a silver salver, to receive the larger contributions: two were provided with wooden ladles, for the copper offerings; and these they shook in the ears of every one who approached: and one man, the priest, stood just within the gate, armed with a shillelah. *No one was admitted who did not contribute!* I saw a man attempt to pass without contributing; and I saw the priest push and buffet the man, and, at length, strike him several times with

his stick, and knock his hat off his head! This is no matter of hearsay. I saw it: and I saw from thirty to forty persons kneeling outside of the gate, on the high road,—poor persons, who had not a halfpenny to spare. To be more and more sure, that this was the cause of their remaining without, I gave some halfpence amongst them, and saw them admitted.

The influence of the Catholic priesthood in this neighbourhood is great; but, from all that I could learn, and from conversations I have myself held with the lower classes, I have some reason to think it is on the decline. An instance occurred only a few days before I left Tipperary, in which a Catholic priest who attempted to interfere in a fight, was set upon by both parties, and treated with very little reverence.

Mr. O'Connell's proposition, respecting the allowances to the Roman Catholic clergy, created a great sensation in this part of Ireland: the priests generally affirmed their hostility to the proposal; but I should take the liberty of greatly doubting whether that hostility would be very obstinate, in case of the proposal being actually before them, for acceptance or rejection. Some are of opinion, that its acceptance would be a death-blow to Catholicism; but this opinion must not be taken up too hastily: so long as dues are exacted by the priests, for the performance of those offices, upon which the people consider their title to heaven to depend, so long will the priest receive these dues; and so long, therefore, will a large portion of influence be retained.

Cahir is rather an improving place. The flour trade is pretty extensively carried on, both in grinding, and in carrying to Clonmel. Very extensive corn mills have recently been erected; and they are in full employment. About 80,000 barrels of wheat were brought into Cahir last year: and the trade is on the increase. But, notwithstanding this trade, want of employment is felt in Cahir. I noticed, on Sunday, in coming from church, the street crowded with labourers, with spades and other implements in their hands, standing to be hired; and I ascertained that any number of

these men might have been engaged, on constant employment, at 6*d.* per day, without diet; for partial employment 6*d.*, with diet, or 9*d.* without diet, was usually given.

I remained some little time at Cahir, and in its neighbourhood; and was delighted with the scenery on the Suir. I shall not soon forget the charming scenes which a day, spent with some hospitable friends, introduced me to. The climate, in this part of Ireland, must be very favourable to the productions of nature; and, after seeing a garden in this neighbourhood, I found reason to think, that I had overrated the exclusive capabilities of Guernsey and Jersey. In the garden to which I allude, I found azalias in the utmost perfection; magnolia; aloe; camellia; arbutus, quite a tree; evergreen magnolia; myrtle; althea frutex; daphne; rhododendron, of all colours; and from thirty to forty species of holly, in flower: besides innumerable fine specimens of laurel and bay. All of these were growing in the open air, and without flower-pots.

The whole valley of the Suir, here, is beautiful: there are deep woods, and green slopes, and a sparkling river; and two fine mountain ranges—the Galtee and the Lismore hills; and, if one descends as far, the ruined castle of Ardfinane, and its village, the property of Lord Donoughmore, who sadly neglects it. I understand, however, that his lordship is fettered by middle-men; and is but partially responsible for the state of Ardfinane. A great part of the population is Protestant; and the place is, altogether, miserably poor.

It chanced to be the fair at Cahir on one of the days I spent in its neighbourhood; but the unfailing accompaniment of Tipperary fairs—fighting—seldom takes place at Cahir; for there are extensive cavalry barracks, and a regiment of dragoons, within five minutes' ride of Cahir. One does not see so much rustic gallantry at an Irish, as at an English fair. In fact, from all that I could learn, marriage in this country is a very commercial concern; arranged by parents; and, respecting which, there is as much higgling as about any other bargain. Girls are extremely obedient; and some-

times never see the bridegroom until the moment of the marriage; for it not unfrequently happens that the girl's father and the intended husband differ, about a pig, or a chair, or a table, less or more; and another "boy," who chances to stand in need of a wife, making a more liberal offer, he is accepted, and the first lover discarded.

On the night of the fair I returned to the town, about midnight, having been dining in the country, a mile or two distant. I met several persons on the road, but no interruption or insult of any kind.

I left Cahir, at an early hour in the morning, for Clonmel, the largest town in the county of Tipperary, and one of the most important towns in the interior of Ireland. After a charming drive of nine miles, through a very agreeable and improving country, I passed under the gateway of Clonmel, and alighted at "the Great Globe."

At once, on entering Clonmel, one perceives a hundred indications of an improving town. This was truly refreshing, after Kilkenny, Cashel, and the many other wretched places I had passed through and sojourned in. For the last fifteen years the prosperity of Clonmel has been steadily increasing, and it is, at present, a decidedly improving town. It is the great point of export for the county of Tipperary,—which is one great granary,—as well as for parts of other counties; for it is the first point at which water carriage commences.

The chief branches of the trade of Clonmel are, the corn trade, the bacon trade, and the butter trade. The first of these is very large, not fewer than between two and three hundred thousand barrels of wheat being annually brought into Clonmel. The corn-mills in, and about Clonmel, are upon a very extensive scale, and are very numerous. A corn-mill in England is, generally, a little picturesque building, crossing a rushing stream, and employing "the miller and his men,"—some half-dozen perhaps. Corn-mills at Clonmel are very different things: they are like the great factories, or mills, which we find in the English manufacturing districts, and employ almost as many persons.

The bacon trade here is also very extensive,—not fewer than 50,000 pigs being on an average killed in one year. Last year, some considerable diminution in this trade took place; owing probably to several conspiring causes;—among which may be named, a preference in England of English curing; the abrogation of the duty on salt, which lessens the expense of English curing; and the constantly increasing facilities of steam conveyance, for the export of the live pig. The butter trade, which is still large, has lately been somewhat on the decline. It is common in Clonmel, for all these three branches of trade to be united.

Clonmel has other inferior branches of trade, which give considerable employment. There is a very large distillery in the neighbourhood, as well as several breweries; there is also a branch of the calico manufacture: and I must not omit, amongst the sources of employment and prosperity, the establishment of Mr. Bianconi, of which Clonmel is the headquarters; for it is obvious, that the care of so many horses,—the wages paid to so many men,—the building, and painting, and repairing of so many cars,—the making and mending of so much harness,—must give profitable employment to a great number of persons. Clonmel would be greatly advantaged by the improvement of the navigation of the Suir, which only admits boats of small tonnage up to Clonmel. But this, I fear, is a distant prospect; since it would require a larger sum to effect it, than, for some time at least, is likely to be vested in Irish improvements. There are not, in Clonmel, many able-bodied labourers out of employment; destitute persons are of course found, and some mendicants; though the number is few, considering the size of the place; labourers however live little better here than they do elsewhere; and a great part of the higher wages of artisans is spent in whiskey. In Clonmel, there are no fewer than 160 licensed houses.

I was pleased to learn, that great harmony exists in Clonmel between Catholic and Protestant. They live very amicably together. The population of Clonmel is about 18,000: of whom about 15,000 are Catholics, the remaining 3000

being of various sects. There are about 1800 Episcopalians, and a considerable number of the Society of Friends; the members of which, in Clonmel, are generally prosperous, and somewhat aristocratic. I noticed among the Quakeresses, more smartness of dress, and a greater disregard of the strict *costume*, than in any other place I ever visited.

The population of Clonmel wears a respectable look; one sees few ragged and bare-footed people, and few idlers. There is an appearance of something doing; a bustle and throng, evidently arising from people having an object in view. The shops, too, are good, well filled, and well frequented. Nor must I omit another unequivocal sign of improvement. I found two very respectably-stocked booksellers' shops, and two respectable circulating libraries. These were the first libraries I had seen, since leaving Kilkenny: neither at Thurles, Cashel—the archiepiscopal city of Cashel—nor at Tipperary, is there any circulating library, or book society. This is certainly a singular and unpleasant fact. Towns in England, containing, as these do, from seven to ten thousand inhabitants, would certainly afford at least one public library, and more than one reading society. A library was attempted at Tipperary; but it was not supported, and either was lately, or now is, on sale.

I visited the chief public institutions in Clonmel; the most important of which, is the House of Industry. One thing struck me as an error. I saw a great number of persons, who were sent there by a magistrate, for no other reason than because they were females of bad character.—This I cannot but regard as hurtful to the general morals, and indirectly tending to the corruption of female character; for the vacuum occasioned by forcibly withdrawing these individuals, is speedily filled. A large lunatic asylum is now in progress; and this, during the last two years, has been another source of employment to the inhabitants of Clonmel.

Besides its principal commercial streets, Clonmel has many other good streets, inhabited evidently by respectable individuals; and there are a considerable number of resident

gentry in the neighbourhood who keep up much friendly intercourse: and having mentioned this word, I am reminded by it, that I have not said any thing of the state of society, since leaving Dublin. With few exceptions, and unless for some particular object, I do not mention the names of individuals from whom I received attentions. But I have seen enough of society in Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary counties, to entitle me to speak of it.

I should say, that throughout the country, there is a great deal of intercourse, and a constant interchange of visits; and that every one, whose means are sufficient, and whose house is large enough, has resident company: and I must add, that a considerable difference is observable in the mode of life among the same class of persons, in England and in Ireland. I think there is generally more display in Ireland, and a less apparent regard to economy: though it must be recollected, that this display costs less in Ireland, than in England. Two or three servants are seen waiting at table in Ireland, in a house where in England, one would suffice: but then, wages are at least a third lower than they are in England; and it costs a much less sum to support servants in Ireland, because they are contented with a different description of food. Vehicles, too, are more common. Every body keeps a jaunting car; but then a jaunting car costs but 20*l.* or 25*l.* building, with all its et ceteras; and there is no tax on either carriage or horse; and in many counties, no toll-bars.

People entertain handsomely in Ireland; but in looking over the dinner table, one must recollect the difference between London and the Irish markets, in the price of provisions. A pair of fowls, that in London would cost 5*s.* or 6*s.*, may be bought in most parts I have yet visited for 1*s.* or 1*s.* 6*d.* The turkey, that in London would cost 10*s.*, 12*s.*, or 15*s.*, is placed on the table in Ireland, for 2*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.*; and I have seen a roasting pig, which could not have been purchased in any part of England for 6*s.*, bought in Ireland for 1*s.* 6*d.* The profusion of a dinner table, therefore, is not an expensive profusion.

In the article of drink, there is less apparent, as well as less real expense, than in England: in the best society, little wine is taken; and unless in the very highest society, whiskey punch is universally introduced. I have seen whiskey punch at the tables of country gentlemen, worth at least five or six thousand per annum; and where, in nothing else, any deviation could be found from the elegance which pervades the dinner table of men of equal fortune in England. Excellent claret, however, is always at the option of the stranger, if he prefer it.

Of Irish hospitality towards strangers, I need say nothing: that hospitality, is not mere civility; it is kindness also. It must be borne in mind, that in the observations I make at present, I am not qualified to speak of other parts of Ireland, than of the counties of Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary. Of Connaught society, I shall be enabled to speak by and by.

The environs of Clonmel are extremely pretty. The slopes of the hills which form the right bank of the Suir, and which, opposite to Clonmel, are of very considerable altitude, are cultivated almost to the summit; reminding me, in some places, of the slopes of the lower Pyrenees, in the neighbourhood of *Bagnères*. From an elevation called Fairy Hill, situated on the right bank of the river, about half a mile below Clonmel, a magnificent view over the valley of the Suir is laid open,—not surpassed, in richness and variety, by any of the celebrated vales of England or Wales.

Many delightful excursions may be made from Clonmel: particularly up the banks of the river, and through the domains of Mr. Bagwell, Lord Donoughmore, and Colonel Greene. Lord Donoughmore's is a very fine domain, abounding in magnificent specimens of ash, elm, and lime trees; and Kilmanahan Castle, the residence of Colonel Greene, is a fine structure, and beautifully situated. I am sorry I can say nothing in favour of these three landlords. Mr. Bagwell, to whom a great part of Clonmel belongs, does no good, and evinces little sympathy with the people: and the vir-

tues of Colonel Greene, as a resident landlord, are far from being conspicuous. Mr. Bagwell is still young; and it is to be hoped, may yet discover what are the true interests of a landlord.

Having spent some pleasant days at Clonmel, I left that town for Mitchelstown. The first nine miles of the road I was already acquainted with; for the road to Mitchelstown, travelled by Bianconi's cars, lies through Cahir. There is, indeed, another road, by Clogheen and Ballyporeen, famed in song; but the road being (as I was informed) uninteresting, and there being no public conveyance, I preferred taking advantage of Bianconi. Between Cahir and Mitchelstown, there is nothing very attractive; the country is not all under cultivation, nor susceptible of a high state of improvement. The Galtee hills lie all the way on the left, at no great distance from the road; and offer to the eye those pleasant resting-places, and those agreeable diversities of light and shadow, in which mountain views are prolific. I reached Mitchelstown early in the afternoon, and established myself in the Kingston Arms' Hotel; where I remained for about ten days, writing up my notes, digesting my information, and occasionally enlarging my observations: I shall always recollect with pleasure, my sojourn at Mitchelstown.

CHAPTER VI.

Mitchelstown and its situation—Lord Kingston's Domain and Castle—Miserable condition of the People of Mitchelstown, and details—State of the surrounding Country—Rents—The Sessions at Mitchelstown—Lord Kingsboro's Mountain Lodge—Prices of Provisions—Mitchelstown Caves—Journey to Mallow—Donneraille—Mallow—State of the Poor of Mallow and of the Neighbourhood—Farmers—Mallow as a Watering-Place—Suburbs—Duty on Glass—English and Irish Ideas of Comfort—Difficulties in the way of Improvement—Schools—Markets—and rough Manners—The Vicinity of Mallow—Neighbouring Landlords—Bad feeling between the Aristocracy and the People—Return to Mitchelstown—Its excellent Hotel.

I LIKE greatly the situation of Mitchelstown,—fine mountain boundaries form its horizon ; and its neighbourhood offers an agreeable diversity of scenery, in the inequalities of its surface, and the abundance of wood : but above all, there is here the splendid domain of the Earl of Kingston, of which I shall afterwards have occasion to speak more in detail. There is one very singular feature about Mitchelstown. It possesses, what I believe no other town of the same size, or of even much larger dimensions, can boast—a square ; not the mere market-place of a country town ;—there is that besides ; but a square surrounded by well-built houses, and as large as some of the smaller of the London squares. One half of this square, consisting of about seventeen houses, is called the College ; and is an endowment of the Kingston family, for the reception of reduced respectable families, who have a free house and 40*l.* per annum ;—the house, too, being kept in repair. The gate into the Kingston domain forms part of one side of the square, and the hotel is opposite to it.

Free admission into Lord Kingston's park is a great advantage, possessed by all the inhabitants. The gardens even are open to all respectable persons. Lord Kingston's domain contains about twelve hundred English acres; and whether in forest paths, or grassy walks, or wide gravel roads, offers all that can be desired, either for the gay promenade or the solitary ramble. The house—Mitchelstown castle—is one of the most magnificent in Ireland: it is built in the castellated form; and both from its extent and height, is a most imposing object from every part of the surrounding country, seen, as it generally is, towering above the surrounding woods. The interior is not unworthy of the external appearance of the edifice. It has a magnificent gallery, fine suites of apartments, and all besides, that comfort can add to splendour.

Mitchelstown and its neighbourhood have suffered grievously, by the late affliction which has fallen upon the Kingston family:—the deprivation of an expenditure of 40,000*l.* per annum, has been most seriously felt in the country; and the deterioration of Mitchelstown and its neighbourhood, has fast followed the misfortune to which I have alluded;—if I were to search Ireland throughout, I could not find a better illustration of the difference between residence and non-residence, than in the present situation of Mitchelstown.

The evils which have resulted from the misfortune of the Kingston family, affect the whole of the lower classes in the town and its vicinity:—when I was in Mitchelstown, the distress was so urgent, that in order to prevent the actual starvation of hundreds, a public meeting was held, and a subscription entered into; and the scenes, which the investigation that followed, for the distribution of meal, &c., laid open, were of the most aggravated misery. Will it be believed that in a town containing about five thousand inhabitants, *eighteen hundred persons* were found in a state of starvation? at least *twelve hundred* of these were unemployed labourers and their families; the remaining *six hun-*

dred consisting of the aged, the infirm, widows, and their children. In one side of one street, five hundred and seventy persons were found requiring relief: and besides the eighteen hundred requiring relief in the town, nearly twelve hundred more were in a state of destitution, in the immediate surrounding country and within the parish. These are facts, and fearful facts they are: and well worthy the attention of those who are inimical to the institution of *any* system of poor-laws, or of a labour-rate; or who look coolly upon any proposal for providing extensive employment. I should like to know how Dr. Chalmers' "*sympathies*" would have permanently provided for the six hundred aged and infirm? I do not approve of the argument of those who say, "at present the son supports the infirm father—the brother, the aged sister;—why disturb that arrangement which nature points out?" Ireland is not a country in which additional burdens ought to be thrown upon the industrious poor. The willingness of an industrious son—a labourer at eight-pence a-day—to support his father, is no reason why the rich, who are more able than he, ought not to give of their abundance.

The property around Mitchelstown is, upon the whole, in a good condition, as to the rents and the comforts of the landholders. A great part is held directly from Lord Kingston; and it may be fairly said, that there are no rack-rents. The average rent of land to the occupier, may be stated at about 25*s.* The mountain farms are yet very low, as low as 5*s.* an acre: and it was no unusual thing with Lord Kingston, to remit altogether, the rent of a man who was active and of improving habits. Few thatched farm-houses are to be seen. They are mostly stone slated houses, built in the English mode. Where I know that there are the means of comfort within, I like to see a neat exterior. Land is generally under a fair state of husbandry; though no where in the condition of which it is susceptible.

Every where in Ireland, when the opportunity presented

itself, I attended the sessions, and I did not neglect the opportunity in Mitchelstown. Here, I was pleased with the administration of justice,—as indeed I had generally been, elsewhere: it appeared to me to be patient, painstaking, and equitable. A stranger is exceedingly struck with the different complexion of the cases which come before an English and an Irish sessions. Among the twenty-six cases which were called, on the day on which I attended the sessions at Mitchelstown, there was not one case of theft. Five were cases of assault, generally arising out of the merest trifles: and some of these, assaults of the most aggravated character—so much so, that in England they would certainly have been transportation cases: here they were punished summarily, by fine, and imprisonment at hard labour. The rest of the cases were made up of summonses for wages. In these, I observed generally, a great spirit of litigation, and a good deal of quibbling: the sums claimed, were mostly for wages at eight-pence a day, without diet; and one claim was for wages at so low a rate as five-pence. This, however was claimed by a youth. In the cases for assault, the weapons with which the assault was committed, were generally produced,—staves, that would have felled an ox; or stones that would have shattered a three inch board. These latter are the most usual, and fatal weapons in the hands of an irritated, or malevolent Irishman. A stone is hurled at once, upon the least provocation; and it is with stones, that many of the most savage and deliberate murders have been committed.

A visit to Lord Kingston's mountain lodge, where Lord Kingsboro' usually resides, forms an agreeable excursion from Mitchelstown. It lies about five miles from Mitchelstown, among the outposts of the Galtee mountains; and is certainly a delightful retreat. The "lodge" is built on a mount, which rises out of a hollow; and all above, below, and around, are thick fir woods, with a fine back-ground of dark mountains. A rapid stream, too, circles round the height upon which the house stands.

I must not forget to mention the holy well, which is near

Mitchelstown. The Catholic priest has greatly beautified the approach to this spot, which is much resorted to by the devout, for devotional purposes. I have often seen them praying on the brink of the well, which is generally believed to work miraculous cures, and is dedicated to some saint whose name I forget—a saint, not so famous, I think, as some others.

Mitchelstown is a very cheap place of residence: and in proof of this, I annex the following list of prices.

Beef sells at from $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ to $4d.$ per lb. Mutton, at from $4d.$ to $5d.$ Lamb, in the season, about $3d.$ Veal is rarely to be had, and is not of a good quality. Pork, about $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, but is sometimes as low as $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ per lb. Bacon pigs, average $20s.$ per cwt.

Fish is scarce. A good cod may be bought for $2s. 6d.$ A haddock, $6d.$ to $1s.$ The very best salmon may be bought at $5d.$ per lb., and trout a $1s.$ a dozen.

Rabbits are sold at $8d.$ a couple; turkeys, $3s.$ a couple; geese, $1s. 10d.$ a pair; ducks, $1s.$ a pair; fowls $10d.$ to $1s.$ a pair.

Bread of the first quality is $2d.$ per lb. Fresh butter, $9d.$ per lb. in summer; and $1s.$ or $1s. 1d.$ in winter. Milk is sold at $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ for four pints, all the year round. Vegetables are not supplied in great variety, or plenty, except potatoes, which average about $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per stone.

Coals are $26s.$ a ton: turf, $1s. 8d.$ a horse load.

A mason will receive for his labour $2s.$ a day; a carpenter, $2s. 6d.$; a slater, $2s.$; but they cannot get constant employment.

The rent of a good house, containing two sitting rooms, three bed rooms, good attics, a commodious basement story, with garden, coach house, and stables, rates at about $20l.$ per annum. Smaller, but respectable houses, may be had at $10l.$

Some of my readers may have heard of the recently discovered Mitchelstown, or as they are sometimes called, Kingston, caves,—having been discovered on the property of the

earl. Indisposition prevented me from visiting these caves; and having allotted the last day of my sojourn at Mitchelstown for this visit, it was impossible for me afterwards to make up for the omission; because to have delayed my departure, would have forced me to break engagements in other parts of the country; and in particular, one,—to meet the crown solicitor of Munster, at the Clare and Limerick assizes, which I was anxious to attend. I confess, however, that my disappointment was not great; caves, though in Ireland, are nothing *Irish*: and I had reason to know, that there had been considerable exaggeration, on the subject of the caves. I have no great curiosity about these things myself, having seen caves and mines in abundance; and having been always disappointed; and I know also, that my scientific knowledge would not have enabled me to speak learnedly of stalactites, and stalagmites. Such were my grounds of consolation. I annex, however, a few particulars, gathered from the best sources.

The caves are situated about midway between Cahir, in the county of Tipperary, and Mitchelstown, in the county of Cork, but are rather the nearest to Mitchelstown; and as the inn at Mitchelstown is of superior excellence, that is the best point to visit them from. The entrance is scarcely wider than sufficient to allow one to get in; but it has lately been somewhat improved. After entering, you partly walk, and partly slide down an inclined plane, about fifty feet in length; and arriving then at the edge of a precipice, you descend a ladder, and reach, about twenty feet below, another inclined plane, with a very rugged bottom. This leads to one of the halls, not very large, and about thirty feet high; and from thence the visitor creeps on all fours into another hall, where there is much to attract and please. Here are four crystallized pillars, reaching from the floor to the ceiling; one of them, nearly twenty feet in circumference at the base, and forming an irregular cone. Besides this hall, there is what is called the gothic gallery, which is about twelve feet wide; and the garret cave, about thirty feet square; the great attraction of

all these, being the brilliant spar, in many places covering the bottom; the stalactites depending from the roof; and above all, the festooning and drapery of beautiful crystallization, which hang from the projecting rocks, in singular graceful folds. More minute description of a cave than this appears unnecessary. After rainy weather, the bottom is wet: but is passable enough at all times. A good deal of scrambling is requisite, and some creeping; but these only give a zest to an expedition of this kind: and there can be no doubt that the caves, although the subject of ridiculous exaggeration, are worth a visit by any one, and must be extremely interesting to those who are learned in spars and stalactites.

Mallow, which lies about eighteen miles from Mitchelstown, and not very far from the centre of the county of Cork, I visited before proceeding farther south. In going to Mallow, I passed through Kildorrery, and Donneraille. The former of these scarcely requires a passing word. The latter is more interesting; both because it is much larger, and because it is surrounded by the beautiful scenery of Lord Donneraille's domain, which contains about seven hundred acres, and abounds in fine timber. The town is poor enough. Lord ✓ Donneraille gives little encouragement to any thing calculated to improve the place; and evinces but a very moderate sympathy with the condition of the people. His lordship's agent is well-disposed; but his good dispositions receive small encouragement from his superior.

After leaving Donneraille, the road to Mallow is uninteresting. The country is scantily wooded; and a great proportion of it appeared to me to be under very indifferent cultivation. There is a constant gradual descent of between two and three miles to Mallow, which lies in a hollow of the hills: but with a richly wooded and beautiful country immediately around it, and extending up and down the Blackwater river, which runs by the town.

Mallow has long had the character of being a highly respectable town; inhabited by many respectable persons; with a numerous resident gentry around it; enjoying a thriving

retail trade; and a great resort of invalids, for the benefit of its waters. Some of these advantages it yet retains; in others, it has declined. Mallow still enjoys a good trade, partly arising from the well-peopled resident neighbourhood; and partly by the demand of the country dealers; for there are several capitalists, tradespeople in Mallow, who lay in their stocks in London, and who supply the dealers as advantageously as if they went to Cork or Dublin. I found no complaint, therefore, of the retail trade of Mallow, except that which arose from the dull season of the year, and the low means of the agriculturists. Indeed, I should say of the chief street in Mallow, that it had as thriving a look as any English country town.

But these general indications of prosperity, and the really favourable condition of the retail trade, I found to be no index to the condition of the labouring classes. I have every reason to believe I do not speak much wide of the truth, when I assert, that seventy-five per cent. of the working classes of Mallow are not in constant employment; and the remuneration for labour is at the lowest ebb, more than eight-pence per day, without diet, being scarcely ever given. I walked through the establishment of an extensive pawnbroker, and received from my visit no very favourable impression of the condition of even those classes above that of the labouring poor. I saw numerous articles, the property of small farmers, —articles worth from 10s. to 30s., and generally pledged, as I was informed, for payment of county rates. I was also told, that at the time when tithes were sued for, the business of the establishment was extremely flourishing, owing to the property put in pawn by the farmers.

As a resort for invalids, Mallow has greatly declined. Some years ago, it was visited, during the season, by not fewer than a hundred families on an average; and there are not now one-sixth part of that number of visitors. Various reasons are assigned for this. It may be partly owing to the caprice of fashion, which has of late years been setting in in favour of Cove; but it is more the result of the increased

steam intercourse with England, which permits Irish invalids to take advantage of the waters of Cheltenham, Clifton, and other places of resort across the Channel; which, whether better than Mallow or not, have the superior attraction with which every distant place is invested. The waters of Mallow are recommended in cases of consumption, not perhaps so much with the hope of cure, as with the view of alleviating symptoms. The climate too, is mild; the town is entirely screened from cold blasts; and there is a great variety of beautiful and enticing drives. The Spa house is pretty and convenient.

The inhabitants of Mallow are not without their sources of indoor recreation. They have a commodious club house, with a reading room, and tolerable library; and there is a public circulating library in the town, kept by a respectable bookseller.

Mallow, like all Irish towns, has its bad lanes, and its indifferent suburbs; but I have seen worse cabins in most other towns. Few or none were without bedsteads, and some furniture, and glass windows—diminutive indeed—but windows nevertheless. I will not omit this opportunity of observing, that the repeal of the duty on glass would very materially tend to better the habitations of the Irish peasantry. The cabin with a bit of a glass window has quite a superior air, in comparison with its unenlightened neighbours. It must be admitted, however, in throwing out any suggestion for improvement of this kind, that the character of the Irish peasant presents some obstacles; and that the progress of improvement in food, habitation, and clothing, will not be a rapid one: education only can check the tendencies which naturally stand in the way of improvement. There is little or nothing at present of that feeling among the Irish peasantry, which spreads comfort and neatness about and within the cottage of an English labourer; which white-washes, or sands his floor; polishes his table; brightens his utensils; twines honeysuckle and roses round his porch; and covers his table with the materials of a comfortable meal. The Irish peasant is too easily satisfied. The English peasant

will work, not only that he may live, but that he may live well and comfortably. The Irish peasant, on the contrary, will generally work only up to the acquirement of mere subsistence: he would rather be idle, than work for what he calls "kitchen:" (i. e.) all beyond the necessities of life. But first of all, let us enable the Irish peasant to live, even without "kitchen." These superior tastes will follow.

Of the population of Mallow, there are about seven Catholics to one Protestant; and the Protestants are greatly divided: the most numerous body of dissenters from the establishment being the Wesleyan Methodists. I visited one of the schools in their connexion, and found it well attended. There were two or three Catholic children present; and I may take this opportunity of saying, that I have found frequent examples of Catholic parents sending their children to Protestant schools, because they thought their children received a better education in them than in their own; and from my own observation, I think they are right.

In a visit which I made to the market at Mallow, I was considerably struck by the very uncivilized demeanour of the venders. I was accompanied by a highly respectable inhabitant of the town: and not contented with setting forth the excellence of their legs, loins, shoulders, &c., of the beef, mutton, and lamb exposed, they beset my companion like so many savages; and followed him out of the market, half the length of a street; one thrusting a quarter of lamb, the other a saddle of mutton, in his face.

I made an excursion through the beautiful country which surrounds Mallow, visiting, in leaving the town, the pretty residence of Mr. Jephson; and the fine old castle, now ruined and ivy-grown, beautifully situated at the entrance of the pleasure-grounds. I had ample evidence in my drives round Mallow, of the extensive resident neighbourhood. Handsome or pretty villas were everywhere seen, and all inhabited by the proprietors of them; but notwithstanding this advantage, I found a fearful lack of employment for the

labourer. In one parish, where I made minute inquiries, I ascertained that almost any number of labourers could have been hired for constant labour, at six-pence a day—working, out of that miserable allowance, the rent of a cabin,—perhaps eighty days' labour.

The large properties in this part of Cork are under very different management. Lord Arden, who owns a fine estate in this neighbourhood, is a noble-minded man,—perfectly liberal, if not perfectly judicious; and studying, in every way, the comfort of his tenantry. His lordship gives no leases—a practice of which I have already spoken, as not altogether unsuitable to the present condition of Ireland, but which the growth of capital would necessarily put an end to.

A very different landlord from Lord Arden, is Lord Lime-rick. *He* draws the uttermost farthing.

I was sorry to learn, that a bad feeling existed in this neighbourhood, between the gentry and the lower classes. This originated in arrears of rent being demanded from those who had promised votes; but who, when the time arrived, voted as they said, “for their clergy and their country.” Some of these individuals were committed to prison;—the amount of rent due was collected at the Catholic chapel door; and the priest, heading a crowd of people, released the individuals from confinement; and in returning through the streets, took the opportunity of haranguing the people on the tyranny of the upper classes. God forbid that I should quarrel with any man for voting in such a manner, as he conceives likely to serve his country; or that I should defend any acts of revenge, in punishment of supposed political offences. But neither can I excuse the conduct of a minister of religion and peace, irritating the passions of the lower classes, and endeavouring to widen the breach, which unhappily now subsists, between the aristocracy and the people.

From Mallow I returned to Mitchelstown, which I now prepared to leave, for Fermoy, Lismore, Youghall and Cork.

At Mitchelstown, one of the schools under the new educa-

tion board, is in operation ; but I shall abstain from making any observations upon these schools, until I have had more extensive opportunities of judging of them.

Let me not leave Mitchelstown, without doing justice to the excellence of the hotel,—which, I really think, has not a fault. Excepting in some parts of Scotland, I have never eaten such breakfasts as at Mitchelstown. As for dinners, no one could desire better. I shall not soon forget Mrs. Sing's dressed lambs' heads, or rhubarb pies;—wine and whiskey are alike worthy of the dinner that precedes them ; and, in civility, accommodation, and moderate charges, Mitchelstown Hotel must satisfy every one.

CHAPTER VII.

Journey to Lismore—Fermoy—The Blackwater River—Lismore—Picturesque Views—Condition of the Town, and neighbouring Landholders—The Duke of Devonshire—Other Landlords—Ejectments—Visit to the Trappist Settlement at Cappoquin—Details—Environs of Lismore—The Castle—Descent of the Blackwater to Youghall—The Town of Youghall—Its situation—Antiquities—and Inhabitants—Means of Improvement—Trade—The Church—Sir Walter Raleigh's House—Emigration—Journey to Cork—Situation, Streets, and Population of Cork—Suburbs—Traits of Character—Public Institutions—Present state of Cork as a Commercial City.

I now left Mitchelstown, for the military town of Fermoy. The only interesting object on the road from Mitchelstown to Fermoy, is Kilworth, the village and seat of Lord Mountcashel, whose village did not exhibit signs of much prosperity; but I merely speak of it, as I saw it *en passant*; and besides, I passed through it at that very early hour (5 A. M.) when things do not look to great advantage. At Kilworth, there is an extensive corn mill, which gives employment to a considerable number of persons.

Fermoy, which is only eight Irish miles distant from Mitchelstown, is seen several miles before one reaches it. This is partly owing to the extensive barracks, which, at a distance, would lead one to imagine the town much larger than it is. Fermoy, however, is not a very small town, and is a remarkably pretty and prettily situated place. It lies on the right bank of the river Blackwater; and from its extending

in line along the river, *à la militaire*, and having a hollow square in the centre of the line in front of the bridge—covered too, both in flank and rear, by fine, cultivated, wooded slopes—it presents a more imposing appearance than most other towns of the same size. The barracks are magnificent. They stand opposite to the town, on the left bank of the river,—the old on one side, and the new on the other side of the road, which runs from the centre of the town at right angles to it.

I need scarcely say, that Fermoy depends for its support, mainly upon its garrison, which sometimes contains several regiments; and is at all times, one of the largest military stations in Ireland. But notwithstanding the patronage of the military, and consequent good retail trade which Fermoy certainly has, I found that it had its proportion of unemployed persons; and rather more, I thought, than its due proportion of beggars. There is a considerable number of resident gentry about Fermoy; the town has, what is called, a genteel neighbourhood; and by commercial men, it is designated, a good little town.

The banks of the Blackwater, between Fermoy and Lismore, present many attractions; though the more celebrated scenery of the Blackwater is to be found lower down. A finely cultivated country lies all the way on the right; and the opposite bank of the river is adorned by many fine seats, generally embosomed in wood. Mount Cashel appears to great advantage, soon after leaving Fermoy; and the seat of Mr. Grant, some miles farther, is very beautifully situated. I noticed on the road to day, a trait of manners which I had not before observed:—two peasants, who appeared to recognise each other after a long separation, and who chanced to meet on the road, embraced each other, *à la Française*. This by-the-by, is an execrable road—the first very bad road I had yet seen in Ireland.

Lismore possessed a two-fold interest. I had every where heard much of its surrounding beauties; and I had, ever since setting foot in Ireland, heard the very highest praises ✓

of the state of the Duke of Devonshire's property, of which, Lismore was the first portion that had come in my way. My expectations were therefore considerably raised; and I am happy to be able to say, that they were not disappointed. As for the natural beauties of Lismore, they are scarcely to be surpassed. The Blackwater, both above and below the bridge which leads into the town, flows through one of the most verdant of valleys, just wide enough to show its greenness and fertility; and diversified by noble single trees, and fine groups. The banks bounding this valley, are in some places thickly covered, in other places, lightly shaded with wood. Then, there is the bridge itself, and the castle—grey and massive, with its ruined and ivy-grown towers; and the beautiful tapering spire of the church; and the deep wooded lateral dells, that carry to the Blackwater its tributary streams. Nothing, I say, can surpass, in richness and beauty, the view from the bridge, when at evening, the deep woods, and the grey castle, and the still river, are left in shade; while the sun, streaming up the valley, gilds all the softer slopes and swells that lie opposite.

To say that there are no unemployed poor, and no beggars, or paupers in Lismore, would be to assert an untruth; but I feel myself bound to say, that of the former class, there are comparatively few; and that a large proportion of the pauperism of Lismore, does not naturally belong to it; but has resulted from the *clearances* of some neighbouring, and less considerate landlords; and I am also fully warranted in saying, that I found much truth, though perhaps a little exaggeration, in the accounts I had every where heard of the Duke of Devonshire's property.

✓ The foundation upon which the reputation, as a good landlord, of this great proprietor rests, is, that his land is let lower than the land of most other proprietors; that, in fact, a farmer can live out of his land; and this, in Ireland, is saying much. I do not think the average rent of good land, at a moderate distance from the town, exceeds 20s.; and many of the very small occupiers were certainly in a much

more comfortable condition than I had seen them elsewhere. I found, for example, in the course of a walk, one man, who had three acres and a half at 7*s.* an acre. This land was originally in a nearly uncultivated state, and was let for twenty years, at that rent. I found another, paying 3*l.* for two acres of good land close to the town, with a very comfortable house attached, which elsewhere would have let at 3*l.* or 4*l.* without any land. It is also agreeable to have it in my power to say, that no one had an ill word to say of those in the management of the property. In many other minor matters, the tenants of the Duke of Devonshire, at Lismore, have advantages,—the chief of which perhaps is, the privilege of cutting turf, as much as they please, at one penny per horse-load. I would remit the penny: it can be no object to the Duke; and cases may occur, in which a penny may be an object to a poor person. Ejectments too, with their attendant cruelties, are unknown on this property; if tenants must be got rid of, something is done for them. I am sorry I cannot say so much for many other landlords. “I am deucedly fatigued this morning,” said an attorney, upon whom a lady called one Monday morning: “yesterday we had some tough work—thirty-eight ejectments to put into effect, and a world of trouble they cost us; egad, so tenacious were some of the people, that we had to pull down the roofs about their ears.” This is heartless work.

Were it not for the employment afforded on the Duke of Devonshire's property, and for the other advantages enjoyed by those who live under his Grace, Lismore would be a very poor place. It contains no manufacture of any kind; and although the gentry of the neighbourhood are many of them resident, the retail trade of the town derives little advantage from them. Fermoy and Youghall lie too near; and there are besides, the little towns of Cappoquin, and Tallow, each within a few miles of Lismore, and each, of course, in some degree patronized by those who live near to it. I saw no cabins of the very worst description, in the outskirts of Lismore; nor many even nearly approaching to the worst: but

I found, among the aged and infirm, a great deal of that poverty and destitution, which can never be prevented or removed by the exertions of individuals, however high their public character, or however eminent their private virtues.

I devoted a day to a visit to the establishment of the Trappists, situated about six miles from Lismore. The road lies through the little town of Cappoquin; and as far as that place, runs along the left bank of the Blackwater, and discloses at every bend, new and striking beauties. Cappoquin, prettily situated, just at the turn of the river, is rather a clean little village, consisting of one street, which at the upper end degenerates into a suburb of cabins. Beyond this, the road climbs up the side of a deep wooded dell; and gradually rises, until it leaves cultivation behind, and enters upon the moor and bog land, which stretches over all the neighbouring mountains; and upon this upland slope, is situated the Trappist establishment, which has a singular effect seen at a distance,—apart from all other buildings,—itself of immense magnitude, and seemingly placed in the midst of a desert.

It is not yet two years since the Trappists settled in this neighbourhood; and (thanks to the superstitions of the country people) the progress they have made in building the convent, as well as in reclaiming the land, is indeed miraculous. Sir Richard Keane, a large landowner in this neighbourhood, granted them, rent free, on a lease of a hundred years, five hundred and seventy odd acres of moor and bog land; and Sir Richard is likely to be amply repaid for his liberality, in the proof which has been afforded of the capabilities of the land. The very first year, a fine crop of potatoes was raised. At present, upwards of sixty acres are under tillage; and on some of these acres, I saw as luxuriant crops of oats as I had seen in any other part of the country. In the extensive garden, too, which the Trappists have formed, I observed as fine beans, pease, and other vegetables, as could possibly be raised on any soil. All this has been accomplished by the agency of lime kilns. The land is boggy on the surface; but below, there is as fine and deep a

soil, as any farmer could desire. It is true, that there has been a great supply of human labour, and of all its accessories. The brethren themselves are between forty and fifty strong; and in such veneration are these holy men held, that an incredible amount of labour has been contributed gratis. I myself saw eighteen horses and carts, and upwards of twenty men at work, drawing lime, all of them sent by the farmers as an act of piety. Some kinds of labour, however, are paid for. The masons, and others employed in building, are paid ordinary wages,—for the munificence of some great men (among others, the Duke of Devonshire, who, singularly enough, gave 100*l.*) and the contributions of the good Catholics, leave the Trappists in want of nothing. The building, which has only been begun ten months, already vies in size with any moderate sized cathedral, and might hold within it a dozen of the Irish Protestant churches.

The spectacle here offered to the traveller and inquirer, is at the same time pleasing and melancholy. It is pleasing; as affording direct proof of the facility with which a great part of the waste lands of Ireland may be cultivated, by the instrumentality of two things, in which Ireland most abounds,—lime, and human labour; and it affords, too, a melancholy proof of the misdirection of human energies, and the prevalence of superstition.

The Trappists are almost all of them young men. At present, they do not strictly conform to the rules of their order: but the moment their convent is completed, and the necessity for communicating with their fellow men ceases, they purpose taking upon themselves all the austerities of the order—silence, as the most indispensable and distinguishing. The brethren are almost all of them Irish; the few exceptions being English.

I had some conversation in returning, with one of the men who was leading limestone. He was a small landholder, and did not at all grudge his labour; and in place of agreeing with me, that he was a fool to throw away his own and his

horse's labour, he said he should be a much greater fool if he did not. If to the munificence of Protestant landlords, there continues to be united the religious zeal of Catholic farmers and labourers, these five hundred and seventy acres of Sir Richard Keane's will be, ere long, a fine productive estate; and the source of a pretty independency to the brothers of La Trappe.

Besides the Trappist settlement, there are several objects of curiosity at no great distance from Lismore. Amongst these I may particularly mention Drumanna, the seat of Mr. Villiers Stuart; and Glencairn, the residence of Mrs. Bush. The latter of these is higher up the river than Lismore; the former stands on the river side, between Cappoquin and Youghall. But drive or walk in whatever direction you may from Lismore, you are sure of being surrounded by beauty.

There is in Lismore, a school under the new education board, at which between two and three hundred Catholic children attend. Here, as elsewhere, the school is entirely in the hands of the Catholics,—the Protestant clergyman having declined any connexion with it. There is also a Protestant parochial school here, at which about twenty-five children receive instruction. The number of Protestants in Lismore, is under three hundred. There are ninety communicants on feast days. The cathedral church of Lismore is pretty and small; but room is nevertheless found in it, for the stalls of the non-resident prebends and other dignitaries. The office of the dean, who died lately, has not been filled up.

Lismore castle, which I have mentioned as a striking and picturesque object seen from the bridge, is worth a visit, not so much on account of any thing in the interior, as for the view from its summit. The castle was gutted, and rebuilt in the interior, about twenty years ago; and at present, the outer walls only remain in their original state. The pleasure-grounds are beautifully laid out; and are remarkable for a double row of very ancient yews, — which form a most funereal walk,—and for a magnificent clump of ash trees which over-top the castle on one side. In the gardens are

seen all the choice shrubs and flowers usually found in this part of Ireland,—particularly an *arbutus*, as large as a forest tree.

We have had “descents” of the Danube, and descents of the Rhine, and of the Rhone, and of many other rivers; but we have not in print, as far as I know, any descent of the Blackwater; and yet with all these descents of foreign rivers in my recollection, I think the descent of the Blackwater not surpassed by any of them. A detail of all that is seen in gliding down the Blackwater, from Cappoquin to Youghall, would fill a long chapter: there is every combination that can be produced by the elements that enter into the picturesque and the beautiful;—deep shades—bold rocks—verdant slopes—with the triumphs of art superadded, and made visible in magnificent houses, and beautiful villas, with their decorated lawns and pleasure-grounds. There is Tourin, the seat of Sir R. Musgrave, a fine old place; Drumanna, the magnificent domain of Mr. Villiers Stuart, embossed in a world of foliage. There is Campire, and Strancally, and the fine place of Mr. Ronan, and Ballinatray, and others,—all diversifying these banks, in the short course of the river from Cappoquin to Youghall. I left Cappoquin soon after mid-day, and reached Youghall about four o'clock.

I was greatly pleased with the first distant view of Youghall, across the bay, situated under a jutting, wooded hill; and appearing to stand partly in the water; with the gap beyond, through which the broad Atlantic is seen. One might be greatly deceived in the size of Youghall, by merely driving through it. Besides the chief street, which is extremely long, there are many other good streets, both towards the water, and towards the hill; and innumerable lanes also, containing a very dense population. The great number of persons perambulating the principal street in the evening, is indeed particularly striking, and is sufficiently indicative of the size of the town.

But the inhabitants of Youghall have a more healthful, and a more inviting promenade than the street. I scarcely

know any where a finer promenade than the Cork road, just on leaving the town, with the sea directly below the parapet ; and commanding views of the strikingly beautiful entrance to the bay, and of the wide ocean beyond.

Youghall has all the appearance of being, what it is, an old town. The houses, however good, have an old look about them. There are exceptions, of course ; for every town, however old, has its modern quarters ; but the general character of the town, is antiquity. In the chief street, we see an old grey tower—one of the ancient defences of the town. Mounting towards the hill, one stumbles upon massive fragments of the old wall ; and here and there, houses are seen in a ruined state, betokening, I fear, not antiquity only, but decay also. From many points, one catches a fine view over the bay, the town, and the surrounding country ; amongst others, from the pleasure-grounds attached to a building, called “ The College ;” and also, from a garden contiguous to it. The “ College,” although the property of the Duke of Devonshire, is in a sadly neglected condition ; but I believe his Grace’s title is disputed, which partly accounts for this.

The suburbs of Youghall are large and bad : they extend in every direction up the hill, behind the old town wall, and contain many very miserable cabins. I found the rent of those, of a somewhat better description, generally 2*l.* ; which, with wages at eight-pence per day, the usual rate here for constant employment, would require sixty days’ labour ; and, in all cases where the tenant is in the landlord’s employment, it is the invariable practice to take out the rent in labour. In a town so large as this, there must be very considerable want of employment, and a large quantum of destitution,—the result of age and infirmity. Here too, as in every sea-port, there is a class of fishermen, whose precarious calling frequently places them within the reach of pauperism. At the same time there are worse towns in these respects, than Youghall.

Youghall is susceptible of very great improvement in many

ways. Nothing would more certainly confer a benefit on Youghall, than the establishment of a steamer to Bristol. It is true that Youghall is situated between Waterford and Cork, from both of which places there are steamers. But Youghall possesses advantages, which do not belong to either Cork or Waterford. There is no river to descend; the vessel is not obliged, as at Cork, to sail only at the top of the tide, nor, in the return voyage, to wait for the flow. Five minutes after a vessel weighs anchor, at Youghall, she is at sea; and there is little reason to doubt that a steamer from Youghall, in place of from Cork, would save a tide to Bristol. In another respect, a steamer, to and from Bristol, would benefit Youghall. It would create an important trade. At present, the dealers in groceries, &c., are supplied from Cork: they would then lay in their stocks direct from Bristol; and would, in their turn, supply the country dealers.

The improvement of Youghall, as a sea-bathing place, would be another means of increasing its prosperity. I never saw a spot offering greater facilities for this. The sea-beach is beautiful and extensive; fine sites for houses are abundant; the surrounding country is agreeable; and the climate mild. There is not capital enough, or, at all events, not enterprise in Youghall, to set on foot, or carry on with spirit, an improvement of this kind; but it would certainly, in the end, repay the great proprietor of Youghall any outlay of capital that might be necessary. The Duke of Devonshire does nothing for the improvement of Youghall: it is not, like Lismore, his pet town; and the immediate return for capital, laid out in improvement, is not perhaps so obvious as to tempt the experiment. But it ought not to be expected that each outlay should produce its own return; it is in the general improvement of the town, and the consequent improvement of property, that the return ought to be looked for.

Several objects, in and about Youghall, are deserving of the traveller's notice. The church, and its neighbouring ruins, are among the chief objects of curiosity. The church is large and massive; and one window, which remains of the

contiguous ruin, is extremely beautiful, and quite entire. The church-yard, too, is one of the largest and finest, in point of situation, I have ever seen. It is interspersed with lime and other trees; and, like every thing else about Youghall, has many remnants of antiquity,—old tombs, old ivied walls, moss-grown stones, and luxuriant weeds.

Nor must I omit to mention the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh, now called Myrtle Grove, one of the few buildings of its time now habitable. The ancient building appears now, nearly as it appeared in its remote day; the style of the windows only has been changed; and the present possessor, Colonel Fount, evinces a proper respect for the antiquities by which he is surrounded. The interior of the house is oak wainscoting; and, in the drawing-room, the chimney-piece exhibits one of the finest specimens of carving I have ever seen. In making some repairs on this house, one of the oldest printed Bibles extant was found built up in the wall. It bears a date, only thirty-four years after the invention of printing. The environs of this old house are beautiful, and are remarkable for the exuberant growth of evergreens—myrtles and verbena especially, both of which here attain an extraordinary perfection.

I have already slightly adverted to the commercial state of Youghall. I subjoin a few more minute details.

The only import trade of Youghall, is in timber, culm and coal. During last year, nine ships, having a burden of 1710 tons, arrived at Youghall, with 1935 tons of timber, from the British settlements in North America: and this branch of trade is thought to be on the increase. During the same period, 440 coasting vessels, with a burden of 37,400 tons, brought into Youghall 20,605 tons of culm, and 27,680 tons of coal. These branches of trade are nearly stationary.

The export trade of Youghall is considerable, and is thought to be rather on the increase, especially in the export of cattle. The corn trade varies, of course, with the produce of each harvest.

There were exported during the last year 107,090 quarters

of oats; 23,228 quarters of wheat; 4921 quarters of barley; 9988 sacks of flour, 2½ cwt. to each sack; 1013 cows; 5220 pigs; 880 sheep; 2718 bales of bacon; 9950 firkins and 136 kegs of butter:—the firkin contains 90lb., the keg 60lb. All of these exports were for the home markets.

There are thirty-seven vessels belonging to Youghall, varying in burden from 30 to 315 tons; beside fishing hookers.

A strong disposition to emigrate has been of late manifested in Youghall, and its neighbourhood; and, in fact, it may be said of this part of Ireland, as of many others, that emigration is limited only by the lack of means among the lower classes. From the beginning of the year 1834, to the 15th June, 568 emigrants had left the port of Youghall; a greater number than had emigrated in any preceding year. They were chiefly agriculturists, and not of the lowest class. I noticed in one of the poorest cabins, in the neighbourhood of Youghall, where scarcely any furniture was to be seen, one of the printed bills announcing the approaching departure of a ship for Canada, stuck upon the wall. This is a very little circumstance, but it is full of meaning.

I left Youghall, for Cork, by the mail, at an early hour, and proceeded through rather an uninteresting country—much of it under imperfect cultivation—to Castle Martyr; a very pretty, clean village, and every way creditable to Lord Shannon, of whom I was happy to hear the best accounts. From Castle Martyr to Middleton, I observed little that calls for record; but, from Middleton to Cork, nothing can surpass the beauty of the country that lies on both sides of the river Lee, which, at full tide, forms here the first of those magnificent inlets that reach from Cork to Cove. I shall not at present enlarge upon this charming scene, because I shall afterwards in descending the river to Cove, have an opportunity of seeing it to greater advantage, and of doing what justice to it I am able. I reached Cork about nine o'clock, and found accommodation in that most excellent and splendid establishment, "The Imperial."

Cork, I call a very fine city, surpassed by few in the excellence and width of its streets, or in the magnificence of its outlets; and deficient only in the architectural beauty of its public buildings. Although there is not in Cork so great a contrast between splendour and misery as in Dublin, more of this contrast is visible than English cities of the same size exhibit. The best quarters of Cork are fully upon a par with the best quarters of Liverpool or Manchester; but the worst parts of Cork are worse, and more extended than in those towns. The best streets in Cork are the mercantile streets; and in these the shops are little, if at all, inferior to those of Dublin: few streets in Cork have the appearance of being inhabited by the upper classes. One cause of this is, that so large a number of the merchants live out of town. The passion for country houses in Cork is universal; and the extreme beauty of the environs is a great encourager of this passion.

Cork is a picturesque city—in its architecture; in its form; in its situation. With scarcely an exception, the streets are irregular; every house having a style, height, and size of its own; in its outline the city is picturesque; for although the principal part is tolerably compact, it branches out at various points, following the course of the river and its tributaries: and it is eminently picturesque in situation, built as it is upon a most irregular surface, and dominated by the wooded heights that form the magnificent boundaries of the river and its sea-reaches. The best view of Cork is obtained from the elevation which rises to the north, at no great distance from the barracks; but from every elevation, on every side, the city is seen to advantage. It is greatly deficient in spires, however. In any continental city, of the same size, one could certainly enumerate from twenty to thirty: Cork boasts of but two.

The extreme suburbs of Cork are not so wretched as I found them in most other large towns; but if one does not find the long rows of mud cabins which branch out from Waterford or Kilkenny, abundance of wretched hovels are

found in the lanes and yards of the city. In a city containing 107,000 inhabitants, and in which there is no refuge for indigence, excepting that which is supplied by voluntary charity, there must be a fearful mass of helpless pauperism.

I should say of the street population of Cork, that it has a look of respectability. The upper and middling classes have a business air ; and although one is frequently solicited by the mendicant, there appeared to me to be fewer rags, and fewer bare feet—and, in short, a less amount of destitution, relatively to the population, than in Dublin ; or than in any other town I had yet seen in Ireland, excepting Clonmel. But especially, one does not observe in Cork, as in Waterford or Kilkenny, those groups of able-bodied labourers, who find no market for the only commodity they possess. The price of labour in Cork, sufficiently proves the greater demand for it. In Youghall, only twenty-eight miles distant, eight-pence is the usual rate ; in Cork, the double of that sum,—1*s.* 4*d.* may be stated as the common rate. ✓

I was sorry to find in Cork, as in Dublin, the disposition towards improvidence and display, amongst the upper and middle classes, strongly manifest. The passion for country houses, I have already spoken of : but there are other passions that trench upon both industry and economy—particularly the passion for horses and hunting, which, indeed, is not confined to Cork, but is observable in every part of Ireland where I have yet been. Six packs of hounds are kept in the neighbourhood of Cork ; and everybody hunts, who can possibly contrive to keep a horse : nor is the indulgence of this passion looked upon as at all inconsistent with business. The young merchant may, without any imputation on his business habits, mount his hunter at the door of his counting-house. This is very different from our English commercial habits. And, to descend a step lower, it is no inconsiderable proof of the love of pleasure among the citizens of Cork, that in a town of its size, there are nearly four hundred public *jingles*, as they call them in Cork ; or cars, as they call them elsewhere. ✓

The Sunday citizen population is *mighty* gay; and amongst the very lowest classes on Sunday, I saw very few rags. I strolled as far as the bishop's chapel—one of the largest and handsomest of the Catholic chapels—and had there an opportunity of seeing a vast congregation of the lower classes. Besides the multitude which crowded the church inside, there were from six to eight hundred persons kneeling and prostrate, in the inclosure around the church; all of them apparently engrossed with their devotions, and many literally counting their beads.

The public institutions of Cork, are upon a great scale, and generally are conducted on the most approved plan. Amongst these, the most remarkable, perhaps, is the county gaol. This fine structure is situated about three-quarters of a mile from the town, precisely opposite to the city gaol, which stands on the other side of the river. The Cork county gaol is one of the best specimens I have seen. In all that concerns that internal regulation which depends upon the acting governor, it is perfect; and the perfection of its prison system, is only limited by the imperfections of the law. In one respect, I found much to admire in the system adopted by the acting governor; I allude to classification. This assiduous officer has discovered, long ago, that classification by offences is absurd; inasmuch as it is not the worst man, who on all occasions commits the greatest crime; but that the only rational system of classification, is that which classifies by conduct; and upon this principle, I found the governor acting. The labour of the prisoners in the Cork gaol, in part supplies its consumption; and up to the full amount of consumption, there is no good reason why gaol labour may not be made available; beyond this consumption, it would not be advisable to employ gaol labour, in a country circumstanced as Ireland is.

The Cork Institution, as it is called, is familiar to us, from the parliamentary grants which were at one time made to it, and from the withdrawal of these grants. It contains a good deal that is interesting:—a scientific library, of considerable

extent; a museum, including most departments of science; and a fine collection of casts from the antique, which are very properly made available to the advancement of the fine arts, by serving as models for instruction in drawing.

There are many other institutions of a public nature in Cork, deserving of notice: but minute details respecting these, would be inconsistent with my plan. But it is as a trading city, that Cork is chiefly interesting. Since the termination of the war, and especially since the introduction of steam-navigation, the trade of Cork has entirely changed its character. At the expiration of the war, it instantly lost the important commercial advantages which arose from the fulfilment of government contracts; but still retained possession of an extensive general trade: and although it may be said now, that the general merchant is almost extinct, the trade itself is perhaps not diminished, but is only more diffused. This has been owing chiefly to the introduction of steam-navigation; the smaller traders now supply themselves from London or Bristol; and a large trade is also carried on, on English capital, by commission-houses. There are still a few general merchants, and a few houses connected with the West India and Mediterranean trades; but the only large import trade is timber, of which not less than 15,000 tons are imported yearly. All the other articles which, before the introduction of steam, used to form the trade of the large mercantile houses, are now imported in smaller quantities, by the numerous individuals who either retail within the city, or deal in wholesale with the smaller country towns.

The chief export trade of Cork, is the bacon trade, the butter trade, live stock, and the provision trade. Of these the bacon trade is on the increase, and so is the export of live stock. The butter trade is thought to be diminishing, but it is still very large; and owing to the greater perfection of the casks made in Cork, which are known to hold the pickle better than any casks made elsewhere, the foreign export trade in butter is likely to maintain itself. The chief provision trade now, is that afforded by the government contracts.

The manufactories of Cork are not numerous. There is a woollen factory, in which about two hundred persons are employed: and there are also several hundred foundries, and a considerable manufactory of glass. But distilleries and breweries are the great manufactories of Cork,—of the former, ✓ seven were at work when I visited Cork; and of the concerns of Beamish and Crawford, in breweries and in flour mills, ✓ some idea may be formed from the circumstance stated to me in several quarters as a fact, that one-eighth of the whole rate of the city of Cork is paid by that firm. I have already, when speaking of Cahir, adverted to the difference between a flour mill in England and in Ireland. The Lee Mills in Cork, would form the best illustration of this contrast, owing to their very great extent, and the perfection of every thing connected with them. The reason why a flour mill in Ireland is an immense establishment, employing scores of men, and doing business on a large scale, while the English flour mill is a little picturesque house by the side of a rivulet, is, that the Irish miller manufactures on his own account; and this again necessarily results from Ireland being an exporting country.

From all I could collect, I think it may be stated, that Cork is not retrograding in the extent of its trade; although the character and channels of its trade have changed; and it may be added, that a steady improvement is visible to all who have had the best opportunities of observation, in the condition of the middle classes; which, indeed, is but the natural result of that more general diffusion of trade to which I have alluded.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Cove of Cork—Descent of the River Lee—Cove Town and Harbour—Means of improvement of Cove—Boating—Excursion to Blarney—Blarney Castle—"The Groves of Blarney"—The Kissing-stone—Journey to Bantry—Bandon—Clonakilty—Ross-Carberry—Picturesque Scenery—Proofs of Poverty—Skibbereen—Bantry, and its Bay—Cultivation of Bog Land—Coral Sand as Manure—Road to Glengariff—Scenery of Glengariff—Passage across the Mountains—Kenmare—Improving condition of Kenmare—The surrounding Country, and Banks of the Kenmare River—The Barony of Glanrought, and Lord Landsdowne's Estates—Impressions, Facts, and Details—Land and Rents—Condition of the People—Blackwater Bridge—The New Road from Bantry to Kenmare.

EVERYBODY has heard of the Cove of Cork. From the city to Cove, it is about nine miles by the nearest road; and by water, it is eleven. In my journey from Youghall to Cork, I had seen just enough of the banks of the Lee, to give me the desire to see more of them; and I therefore took advantage of the steam vessel, which leaves Cork for Cove every morning. "Have you been to Cove?" "Have you seen the banks of our river?" are the questions often and eagerly put to the stranger in Cork: and well may the question be put: for it is quite certain that if the stranger has visited Cove, he will reply, "Yes, I have; and I have seldom seen any thing more beautiful." The broad river—in reality an arm of the sea, but which has all the appearance of a lake—stretches below the city in a magnificent reach of five or six miles;

high swelling banks rise on both sides ; and these, the whole way to Passage, exhibit the most charming succession of lawns, woods, and pleasure grounds, appertaining to the numerous villas that embellish them : and these are indeed villas, or something beyond villas ; not boxes with their acre, or half-acre of lawn, shrubbery, and garden ; but handsome houses, with room enough about them to give them an air of independence and respectability. Between Cork and Passage, I counted upwards of thirty such houses, calculated, I should say, for the residence of persons with from 1500*l.* to 3000*l.* a year. Besides these, there are innumerable citizens' boxes nearer to the city ; and especially on the banks of the river higher up ; many of them worthy the name of villa, and all, pretty snug places.

Two villages are passed on the right bank of the river, between Cork and Cove. Black Rock is the first of these ; and it is only remarkable for the extensive nunnery, which stands facing the river. Passage is lower down ; and is beautifully situated, just where the wide reach of the river ends, and where it contracts into little more than river width. Beyond this narrow reach, the river sweeps to the left, and discovers at a little distance the magnificent Cove, with its islands and town.

The Cove of Cork means, in England, a large sea basin, situated near to Cork : but the Cork people call the Cove, the harbour ; and by *Cove*, they mean the town which is built there ; while many of us at home scarcely know that there is such a town as Cove. But Cove is not only a town, but a considerable town, and a pretty town ; and the most fashionable sea-bathing place in the south of Ireland.

Cove town is situated on the side of the great basin, and on a considerable eminence, and commands a magnificent view over *the* Cove, with its islands, and rich shores ; and—beyond Spike Island—the narrow entrance from the Atlantic, and the ocean beyond it. It chanced to be within a week or two of the regatta when I visited Cove : and ten or twelve of the yachts were sweeping to and fro, with full sail, under

the influence of a fine light breeze. Yachting and boating are quite a passion in this neighbourhood; and although this, like another passion I have named, tends in some degree to encourage the disposition towards improvidence, which is so truly a characteristic of the Irish nation, yet the public benefit by it. Yachting gives employment to many; and the frequent meetings of the club contribute greatly to the prosperity of Cove; which, however, is far from being so prosperous, as from the many advantages it possesses, it might be expected to be.

Nothing is wanting to render Cove a most flourishing town, but the outlay of some thousand pounds, on the erection of houses for the accommodation of strangers. At present, houses and lodgings are very scarce and very dear. I inquired the rent of a small furnished house—a mere box, with a few square yards of garden, and found it to be 20*l.* a month. For another—a house of two stories—each story with four windows in front, I was asked a hundred guineas for three months. From these prices, it is evident that there is no supply equal to the demand; and that 10,000*l.* judiciously laid out, would be very advantageously invested. But nothing is done for the town in this way. Mr. Smith Barry, who is a good resident landlord, and a public-spirited man, is prevented, I believe by certain circumstances, from granting leases; and the other great proprietor, Lord Middleton, an absentee, either knows nothing, or cares nothing, about Cove and its wants. These are misfortunes for Cove: for situated as it is, in so beautiful a country; so near to Cork; with a fashionable reputation, and with extraordinary advantages of climate, much might be made of Cove. I was happy to learn that a literary society and library had lately been established at Cove; and that the institution was flourishing. I ought to have mentioned, when speaking of boating, that Cove and Cork men row in a peculiar manner. They make a double dip: after immersing the oar, they make a half pull, and then dip, and pull again. This mode of rowing is not elegant, though it is said to be effective.

Who would be at Cork without visiting Blarney, which is situated about six miles from Cork? The road to it lies up the bank of the Lee, and conducts the traveller through a succession of very pretty scenes. The Castle stands upon an eminence, and consists of one very massive square tower. There are many things more picturesque than Blarney Castle; but then, it is Blarney; and is therefore necessary to be visited; and there you'll see

“ The groves of Blarney, that are so charming”—
and the Castle,

“ That was once so ancient”—
and Blarney loch,

“ That holds its own sweet waters,
That have rested in it since before the flood.”

But Blarney loch holds more than its own sweet waters; for it holds the most beautiful of white water-lilies, that fringe its margin, encircled by the great heart-shaped leaves that almost cover the surface. The Blarney-stone which every one is expected to kiss; and which embrace confers on the kisser the power of flattering as much as he pleases, and of commanding the belief of those who are flattered, is on the top of the tower, and quite accessible to all who desire to profit by the opportunity.

From Cork to Bantry there are two roads: one of these is much shorter than the other; but I preferred the longer road, which passes through several considerable towns—Bandon, Clonakilty, Ross-Carberry, and Skibbereen. This is the road travelled by the mail; and by the mail I travelled. It is not a country possessing great interest; and I therefore contented myself with passing through it. Mail travelling in Ireland is not remarkable for its speed, or precise regulations; it ranks, I think, with the English slowest coaches; but it is a very safe mode of conveyance, for the drivers are extremely cautious; and it is also cheap. In speed, regularity, and even cheapness, Bianconi's cars leave the mails far behind.

The fine country, and good husbandry in the neighbour-

hood of Cork do not extend far in this direction. At the distance of but a few miles, I found the land under very imperfect cultivation; and all of it susceptible of great improvement. Near to Bandon, the appearance of the country improves; and there is a slight approach to the picturesque, in following the course of the river. Bandon was once a flourishing manufacturing town; but its manufactures have some time ceased: and although the immediate destitution occasioned by the loss of trade, has been somewhat cured by emigration and otherwise, Bandon is at present a poor town, and is stocked with paupers. I did not stop to make any particular inquiries; and can therefore speak of Bandon only as I saw it, *en passant*:

From Bandon, the road winds through a bare, ill-cultivated country, to Clonakilty. Proceeding in this direction, things appeared to be evidently getting worse. The cabins almost reminded me of Callen; and every thing had a poor, neglected aspect. Clonakilty is another decayed town:—there was formerly a good linen trade in it; but that manufacture does not now exist; and the town is at present without any means of support, except that which arises from agricultural labour, and the more precarious trade of fishing. I noticed much obvious misery; and the number of bare-footed persons had greatly increased. The effect produced on the traveller by the spectacle of bare feet and legs, depends very much on the state of the weather, and upon other circumstances. A healthy looking girl, tripping along a country road, or field path, without shoes or stockings, suggests no want of comfort; but to see the streets of a town, on a rainy day, trodden by multitudes of bare feet—many the feet of old persons—creates a very different impression, and the impression is a just one. It is impossible to believe that any one would walk bare-footed, on wet, ill-paved streets, from choice; but I know it to be often matter of choice in the country. I have seen a gentleman—a man of family and fortune, and a magistrate—walking through the fields, carrying his boots in his hands, for greater coolness and freedom.

After leaving Clonakilty, the country, although not any better cultivated, becomes more agreeable; and the approach to Ross-Carberry is extremely picturesque. It stands on an elevation, at the head of a long narrow inlet of the sea, flanked by wooded banks, and itself half hidden in wood. We skirted the town; and stopped just opposite to the Court-house, where a petty sessions had been held. The court had just broken up; and the room emptied itself of as ragged a population as I had yet any where seen. I scarcely saw one woman or girl with shoes or stockings; and here, for the first time, I observed a considerable number of the men also bare-footed. The Court-house is certainly not the place where any one would have gone bare-footed from choice.

After leaving this town, the country became extremely picturesque. We passed along, and round the heads of deep, winding, wooded inlets of the sea,—reminding me, in some degree, of Norwegian scenery on a small scale; and soon after reached Skibbereen, a small ugly town, but a busy and thriving town; enjoying an excellent retail trade, owing to the demand of an extensive surrounding district.

It is a very poor and uninteresting country that lies between Skibbereen and Bantry; the greater part of it is bog land: some small part of it indeed reclaimed; but a large portion which human labour has never approached. On some parts, where little pools of water had collected, the water-lilies, white and yellow, were numerous; and on others, the beautiful white tufts of the bog-cotton, relieved the dreariness of the prospect. The approach to Bantry is pretty. Rounding a little inlet, one suddenly reaches the margin of the bay; and, keeping its waters on the left, and the domain of Lord Bantry on the right, ten minutes more brings one into the little town, and to the very indifferent inn, or hotel, as I believe it is called, which the town affords.

Bantry lies at the head of the celebrated bay which bears its name; encircled by hills, or at least by considerable

elevations, many of which are tolerably cultivated, and wooded. Lord Bantry is the great proprietor here, and is universally well spoken of. His lordship is for the most part resident; and as far as his means will permit, he consults the benefit of the town, and the comfort of the people. Much might be done for Bantry, as a sea-bathing resort; and money judiciously laid out, would certainly be invested to advantage. There was formerly a considerable fishery at Bantry; but it has now failed—the fish having changed their place of resort.

For the cultivation of the bog land in this neighbourhood, extraordinary facilities are afforded; and owing to these, the country appears to be in a very improving condition. I allude particularly to the Bantry sea-sand; which is called there, coral sand, and which is allowed, by universal consent, to be the most efficacious of manures, for the improvement of every description of land, as well as for the reclamation of bog land. Common sea-sand is a very common manure, in many parts of this country; but the superior excellence of the Bantry coral sand is universally admitted, and is owing to the large proportion of lime which it contains.

My course now lay by Glengariff, Kenmare and Killarney, to Tralee and the lower Shannon. The weather not permitting boating, I hired a car to carry me to Glengariff; and I question whether much was lost by the substitution of a land journey. The road winds round heights, and through hollows, generally wooded; and doubles a number of inlets of the sea; some of them open to the ocean; others having the appearance of lakes; and fine views are every now and then caught over Bantry Bay and its mountain boundaries.

Few spots offer a more perfect example of the picturesque, than Glengariff inn. It is situated at the head of a narrow creek which runs up from the bay. High mountains form one of the boundaries of the creek; and the beautiful domain of Captain White, Lord Bantry's brother, forms the other. Rocks, rushing streams, wooded ravines, quiet coves, and a fine back-ground of mountains, are the

elements of the landscape. I was not disappointed in Glengariff, because I had put little faith in the exaggerated reports I had heard and read. Visit Glengariff with the expectation of finding much that is picturesque, and you will not be disappointed; but if sublimity and the magnificence of nature be looked for, they will certainly not be found.

I visited, and was greatly pleased with, Captain White's domain: it contains many beautiful spots; commands many fine mountain views; and is adorned by a fancifully built, but judiciously placed, mansion. I found no complaint of want of work in this neighbourhood: the new road now in course of being formed, between Glengariff and Kenmare, employs several hundred hands; and the people upon Captain White's property are generally comfortable. Few have less land than suffices for the keep of two cows, the rent of which is taken out in labour, at eight-pence a day. I dined sumptuously at Glengariff, on pink-coloured—there called white—trout, caught an hour before; a dish of scoloped cockles, new potatoes, and flour scones; which with a glass of parliament whiskey, helped to prepare me for the fatigue of the journey to Kenmare.

Most people travel this road on horseback; but not being able to get horse or pony to my mind, I hired a car, and two men to assist. These cannot well be dispensed with, unless the horse drag kindly up, and back well down hill. The road, though excessively bad, and so extremely steep that one must walk nearly the whole of the way, presents so many fine mountain views, that no one has any right to grumble. The rock scenery is particularly interesting; and mixed with the oak and holly woods, above which the great rocks lift their broad backs, is not only of a picturesque, but of a very novel character. I left the road, to visit a lodge of Lord Bantry's, remarkable only for its seclusion, and for the clearness of the stream which rushes by; and took the opportunity of also visiting two houses, in one of which I found a peasant who owned three acres, for which he paid

3*l.*; and in another, a peasant who owned three acres and a half, for which he paid 3*l.* 10*s.* It is a good mode of confirming the truth of what one hears from different individuals, to inquire not only as to their own circumstances, but also into those of their neighbours; if the statements of their neighbours correspond with their own, there is every reason to believe them correct.

I found the road as bad, but not so steep, as it had been represented. I believe the horse could have dragged up the car without assistance; but the men assured me, that in descending, I should find their aid indispensable. Just as we reached the summit of the pass, the mists, which had been floating about the mountains,—veiling the extent of the views, but adding perhaps to their beauty,—dispersed; the sun came brilliantly forth; and the whole of the mountains stood clearly out, with all their glens and shadows, and little silvery lakes. The descent I found to be indeed very rapid: the men had brought ropes, with which they endeavoured to lock the wheel, by attaching it to the axle; but the rope was rotten, and broke; and the descent was not accomplished without some scrambling.

From the foot of the mountain to Kenmare, I passed through an evidently improving country: the road was tolerably good: I saw several comfortable looking houses; and a greater number of lime kilns, the beneficial effects of which were evident in the appearance of the neighbouring land. Every farm, indeed, appeared to have a lime kiln of its own. A few miles before reaching Kenmare, the valley of the Kenmare river, and the river itself, are descried from a height over which the road passes. Soon after a bridge is crossed; and the road, running parallel with the river, and under a fine arch of trees, reaches the town.

Kenmare is a small, but very prettily situated town. The estuary, called the Kenmare river, reaches some miles above it; and from Kenmare to the sea, the distance is about twenty-six miles. The estuary varies in breadth, from two or three hundred yards, to upwards of a mile; and presents,

in its whole line, the aspect of a magnificent river. I was struck by observing from the windows of the inn, what is rather a novel spectacle in the small Irish towns,—several large houses in course of building; and, upon walking over the town, I counted no fewer than eleven good houses in a state of forwardness: a considerable number of others seemed to be newly built; and although I observed six or eight houses in a ruined condition, I thought myself warranted in concluding, from what I had seen, that these were intended to be replaced by a better description of buildings. This I afterwards found was to be immediately done. Extending my walk a little way out of the town, towards the river, I reached a new pier, from which, I was glad to learn, that corn had been shipped, for the first time, last autumn, for the English market. This neat little pier cost 2100*l.*; of which the Marquis of Lansdowne contributed 1200*l.*

I spent two days in and about Kenmare,—one of them, a long summer's day, mounted on a Kerry pony, riding down the opposite side of the Kenmare river,—riding and walking in and out among the mountain glens, and traversing the greater part of the Barony of Glanrought. I had a double enjoyment in the ramble: arising both from the charming weather and fine mountain views, and from the spectacle of a rapidly improving country, and a comparatively comfortable population.

I think I said, in a former chapter, that from the moment of setting foot in Ireland, I had heard the highest character of the property of the Duke of Devonshire; and that, on that account, I felt a more than usual interest in reaching Lismore. A precisely opposite reason increased the interest of a visit to Kenmare; for I had heard very indifferent accounts of the property of Lord Lansdowne; and was told in Cork, that I should find a miserable population, who were accustomed to shut up their cabins, and go a-begging for months during the summer. Now, it affords me the greatest pleasure to be able, from minute personal observation and inquiry, to bear testimony to the improving condition of this extensive and na-

turally barren tract, and to the comparatively comfortable condition of the people. Formerly, the greater part of this property was held in large farms, by lessees, who sub-let these lands in small portions, and therefore became middlemen. As these leases have dropped, by death or otherwise, the estates, so held, have been divided into farms of equal size, and let to tenants holding immediately under Lord Lansdowne, who has erected upon each farm a comfortable dwelling-house, the whole expense of which, excepting labour, has been defrayed by his lordship.

Riding through this part of Kerry, one is immediately struck by the absence of mud cabins, and by the presence of these new farm-like houses, every where dotting the slopes. Such things being rarities, I did not content myself with a distant view; but visited ten or twelve of these houses, and they seemed to me well suited to the wants of the individuals by whom they were occupied. There was nothing of pretension about them. I found them to be built of lime-water, rough-cast, with chimneys, and with two apartments inside; and generally containing a sufficiency of furniture, and a fair portion of comfort,—speaking always, let it be recollected, with reference to the character and habits of the people. And, what is most important of all, I did not find that the tenants were paying exorbitant rents. One tenant, occupying a little farm of nine acres, with one of these houses, paid 2*l.* 13*s.* for his possession; that is, about six shillings an acre. From one to two acres of this farm were under tillage; and the rest was in pasture, on which two cows were fed. I found another tenant occupying eighteen acres, paying for his farm 7*l.* 2*s.*, or eight shillings an acre. This was somewhat more improved land; it supported four cows; and grew potatoes, corn, and flax. I found another, with thirty acres, paying 6*l.* 4*s.*, or four shillings an acre. This was poorer land; but the farm supported six cows—though four would have been a more proper number—and grew a little wheat on low spots, and excellent potatoes. All of these farms had houses attached; and I certainly feel myself bound to say, from a

very minute observation of these houses and lands, that these, and all the other tenants similarly circumstanced, held their land on terms, on which any industrious man might pay his rent, and support his family in that degree of comfort consistent with Irish notions. There are other advantages too, which these tenants possess. Every one has turf *à discrétion*, for the trouble of cutting and fetching it; and as the whole of these lands lie along the Kenmare river, fish is easily attainable. I counted upwards of forty boats lying on the beach; and to the smaller tenants, whose farms are chiefly in pasture, and require little labour, the privilege of fishing is a most valuable one, both for the purposes of sale and subsistence.

During this day's ride, I counted fifty-seven farm-houses of the description I have mentioned; and I was informed, by the farmers, that I had not seen a third part of the number. Throughout the whole of this tract, there are not any of those mud cabins, with a small patch of potato land, which are so numerous in most parts of Ireland. No tenant holds a less quantity of land than about eight acres. I speak, at present, of land held immediately under Lord Lansdowne; for nothing will strike a traveller, in this country, more than the difference in the condition of land so held, and of that land which is held under several middle-men. I passed through some clusters of as miserable cabins as I ever beheld—twelve or fifteen of them congregated together. I went into several of these, and found that they were all held under lessee middle-men—some of them resident, and some absent. These cabins had but a small portion of land annexed, and were, beyond description, wretched abodes; and the inmates of two of them told me, that they were in the habit of shutting up their cabins, and going, for a month or two, during autumn, in search of work, or livelihood, into Cork county, or elsewhere. If I had merely inquired upon whose estate these people lived, and heard from them that the estate was Lord Lansdowne's, without inquiring whether there was any intermediate holder, I should have thought I had found confirma-

tion of the necessitous condition, and begging propensities, of that noble Lord's tenantry. It is proper for me to state, that I found several larger middle-men, excellent men, and improving landlords, and with no tenantry in the condition I have mentioned.

In the course of a ramble, up one of the distant glens, fell in with two men holding mountain farms. These, as they, themselves, told me, had been holders of little more than cabins, under middle-men; and, when the lease expired, and the land was divided and appropriated among the existing tenants, these two, being considered to have the least claim, and the original farm not being large enough to be divided among all those who had holdings on it, were turned upon mountain land: eight acres were given to one of the two, and fifteen to the other. One paid a rent of 2s. 6d. for his farm; the other 4s. They told me they could scarcely live out of their land; but I suspect industry was wanting, for on land close to theirs, I saw good corn and potatoes growing; and both lime and sea-sand are plentiful over this country. Idleness will make a pauper of any one; and it is impossible for any landlord altogether to exclude pauperism. Standing with a farmer, at the door of his house, I observed, in a hollow at a little distance, five or six cottages in a ruined condition; but smoke issued from the door, and through holes in the roof, of one of them. These, the farmer told me, were the cabins of those who had been on a farm, of which the lease had expired, and which was now divided; but he knew nothing of the inmate of the smoking cabin. I walked down to the hollow, and found a man, his wife, and three children, living in this roofless and utterly unfurnished hovel, and although, at first, I could get no other information than that they were tenants of Lord Lansdowne, I ascertained, at length, that they had been tenants of this same cabin under a middle-man; and when the lease dropped, and the farm was divided, this individual was offered a mountain farm, which he would not accept: and, after having been wandering through different parts of the country, begging, he had re-

turned, with his family, and taken possession of the cabin in which he had formerly lived.

I have dwelt the longer on the events of this day's ride and on the condition of the property on the Kenmare river, because of the very unfavourable reports I had heard: and finding as I did, that these reports were utterly without foundation; and that this very untractable district,—so unfavourable in many respects to improvement,—exhibited those unerring signs of it, which can result only from a considerate landlord, and an intelligent agent, I felt it to be my duty to state the facts upon which I have grounded my opinion: and I would only add, that the more distant I was from these estates, the more unfavourable were the reports I heard of them; and in their immediate vicinity, and amongst those best qualified to judge, I heard nothing but the most favourable reports. I would take the liberty, of particularly mentioning the Earl of Kenmare,—by universal consent, one of the best of landlords,—who spoke to me in the highest terms of the condition of the property to which I have so particularly alluded.

There is still one other observation I have to make, before proceeding on my journey. When we speak of a poor, or a rich tenantry, we ought to speak with reference to the nature of the land. A rich population is not to be expected on a mountainous district, like the barony of Glanrought; and when we find tenants of mountain farms circumstanced as they are in this country, we ought to expect nothing beyond a very moderate share of comfort. Suppose a farm of a hundred acres to have been held by a middle-man, and that thirty tenants are located upon it; this lease drops, and the landlord proceeds to divide. To continue these thirty tenants upon the hundred acres, giving little more than three acres to each, would only be, to perpetuate pauperism. The landlord has perhaps laid down a rule, that he will have no tenant with a smaller possession than eight acres; because, in an upland country, no man can be comfortable on a less quantity of land: the twelve most improving of the thirty tenants

are therefore selected for holdings, each of eight acres, on these hundred acres; and the remaining eighteen become possessors of mountain holdings—not so good, indeed, as those possessed by the selected twelve; but vastly better to an industrious man, than no holding at all: and thus it will be seen, that poor, though not pauper tenants, must exist upon every improving estate, situated in an upland country.

Before leaving Kenmare, I visited Blackwater bridge, which lies amongst the mountains, about six miles distant. It is a very agreeable ride to this spot, and the scene itself is beautiful. The river tumbles through a deep channel, in a ravine finely fringed by oak and ash trees; a high and very picturesque bridge of two arches spans the river; and I had there an opportunity of seeing the spectacle so often described, of the unwearied efforts of the fishes to get above the fall.

Kenmare, and all this district, will receive incalculable benefits from the fine road, now constructing from Bantry to Cork: this road, which takes Glengariff in its line, will connect Killarney with Cork by a most interesting route; and it is intended to throw a bridge over the Kenmare river, or sound, as it is there called, just below the town.

I now left Kenmare, for Killarney. The first part of this excellent road is not particularly interesting. It leads through an upland, bare, and partly cultivated country, in which, however, there are signs of improvement, and some tolerably good houses; and after passing a lake and a few cottages, the descent towards Killarney begins. The first view one obtains of the upper lake of Killarney, is not striking: it disappointed me; but the weather was rather unfavourable for the enjoyment of scenery, and I suspended my judgment, although I could not alter the impression. The descent along the sides of the hills, and through the fine woods with which they are clothed, pleased me much; and here, for the first time, I saw, almost in its perfection, the arbutus—the far-famed pride of Killarney. I noticed here also, for the first time, that pretty little flower

which forms sometimes our garden borders ; and which is called " London-pride," or " none-so-pretty." In descending to the lake, the road passes through a tunnel, which has a good effect, but which was certainly unnecessary ; as a little more free use of gunpowder would have entirely opened up the passage. Soon after passing through this tunnel, the road descends close to the shore of the upper lake, and winds first along part of its margin, and then continues to skirt a part of Turc lake, with the fine wooded elevation called Turc mountain on the other side. There, however, the road leaves the lakes ; and passing through a fine rich country, and skirting several domains, leads into the town.

CHAPTER IX.

The Town of Killarney—Idleness and Pauperism—Lord Kenmare—Bad Feeling among the Aristocracy, and its Causes—The Lakes—The Author's Opinion of Killarney Lakes—Their Character—Upper Lake, Ture Lake, Lower Lake—Glena—Innisfallen—The Echoes—Comparison with the English Lakes—Muckross Abbey—The Earl of Kenmare's Domain.

KILLARNEY suggests to an Englishman, merely a spot where lakes are situated: it is nothing but a name. But to one residing in the neighbourhood, it suggests a biggish, populous, noisy, and not very pretty town. The situation of the town is good, without being at all picturesque: for although with a fine country around, it lies at least a mile and a half from the nearest point of the lakes. There are two good streets in the town; but many had alleys, and close filthy lanes and yards: and I regret to say, that there is a large pauper population, and a vast number of idle persons—some from necessity, and some from choice: for besides its own natural proportion of destitute and unemployed persons, Killarney has in addition, that class of the idly disposed and poor, who are either attracted to every spot much resorted to by strangers, or who are created, by the charm which precarious employment possesses in the estimation of many, over the more certain, but more moderate wages of labour.

Killarney is the property of the Earl of Kenmare ; but his lordship is just as little answerable for the faults of Killarney, as the reader of this book. The whole of the town is held under leases for ever ; so that Lord Kenmare has no power of improvement in his hands : and this is greatly to be regretted ; for a better man, or a better landlord than Lord Kenmare, does not exist ; and were it not for the employment afforded on his estate, by this wealthy resident and public-spirited nobleman, the pauperism of Killarney would be fearfully great. A considerable part of Lord Kenmare's large estate is in the hands of middle-men ; but his lordship is strenuously exerting himself to bring about a better system.

There is much bad feeling among the aristocracy in the neighbourhood of Killarney : and Lord Kenmare is far from being so popular among a certain class, as he deserves to be. Amongst the neighbouring gentry, there are many large middle-men, who are not fond of Lord Kenmare's reforming system ; and there are also some of Mr. O'Connell's friends, and even some branches of his family, who cannot forgive the sin committed by the head of the Irish Catholic aristocracy, in being an anti-repealer, and a respecer of order ; nor pardon the slight put upon them by Lord Kenmare, in selecting, as his deputy lieutenants, men upon whom he thought he could depend for support, in time of emergency. Through these causes, bad feeling has been also excited among the lower classes, which is greatly to be regretted : because Lord Kenmare's religious opinions, and his high rank (for the Irish peasant has much respect for blood), might have otherwise exerted a most powerful influence on his numerous tenantry and dependents,—an influence which would certainly have been well exerted.

But I must not forget, that there are such things as the lakes of Killarney ; and although I have no intention of writing a guide to the lakes, I must not pass over with too slight a notice objects deserving all the reputation they have acquired. To obtain any correct notion of the beauty of the Killarney lakes, it is necessary to embark at the head of the

upper lake, and to descend the chain—a distance of about fifteen miles. The best way of accomplishing this, which may be accomplished in one day, is, to go from the town round the lower part of the lower lake, and by the gap of Dunlow. By this route one passes some fine seats—particularly that of Lord Headly,—and another, the residence of one of the O'Connell family. The mountain views, too, are fine,—particularly the views of M'Gillicuddy's Reeks, and of another mountain, Carràn Tùal, which is now admitted to be the highest of the Irish mountains. This claim always carries some little interest with it; and Mangerton—always an ugly mountain,—divested, as it now is, of its claim to being the highest, has become almost insignificant. The height of Mangerton, is 2550 feet: while that of Carràn Tùal, is 3410.

The gap of Dunlow did not seem to me to be worthy of its reputation: it is merely a deep valley: but the rocks which flank the valley, are neither very lofty, nor very remarkable in their form: and although, therefore, the gap presents many features of the picturesque, its approaches to sublimity are very distant. I was more struck by the view after passing the gap, up what is called “the dark valley,”—a wide and desolate hollow, surmounted by the finest peaks of this mountain range.

After passing the gap of Dunlow, and descending the steeps on the south side, I embarked at the head of the upper lake, and descended the chain of lakes, through many varied and most enchanting scenes. I saw Killarney to every advantage; for I was favoured by one of those warm days of sunshine and shade, which are particularly calculated for the enjoyment of mountain and lake scenery,—a sky, warm enough to give richness to the landscape, and yet without the haziness which accompanies heat; and air, just enough to vary the effects of light and shade, on lake and mountain, without disturbing that tranquillity which is the peculiar charm of lake scenery. I had likewise the advantage of Lord Ken-

mare's boat and rowers, and of the particular instructions which they had received from his lordship.

If the traveller visit Killarney without those exaggerated notions which are apt to be conveyed by a guide-book, he will certainly be satisfied and delighted. There is nothing of the sublime about Killarney; but there is all of that kind of beauty, which depends upon the combinations of form and colour. The mountain outlines can scarcely be finer than they are; and in the variety of colour produced by the variety of foliage, from the beautiful bright green of the arbutus, to the brown mountain heath,—Killarney is eminently distinguished.

To my mind, the upper lake is the most attractive: the mountains are nearest to it; it has not one tame feature; and it is more studded with islands than either of the other lakes. I landed upon several of the islands, and was delighted with the luxuriant vegetation; and above all, with the arbutus, which is here a great tree; and whose fresh tints contrast so well with the grey rocks among which it grows. There is a sweet secluded cottage on the shore of this lake, usually called Hyde's cottage, but which is now the property of the Earl of Kenmare.

The narrow passage, or channel, between the upper and the other lakes, is at least five miles in length; and offers a charming variety of scenery. Indeed, I doubt whether anything about Killarney surpasses the scene around Dinas island. It is a perfect specimen of close river scenery; nor have I any recollection of having seen its equal on the banks of any of the many Continental rivers which are familiar to me,

Turc lake, which is reached after passing through the channel, is not, at the first glance, so attractive as either of the other lakes; but if the traveller do not coast round Turc lake, he will lose much. It has numerous tiny bays and coves, —beautiful in form,—and offering to the eye of the painter the most exquisite combination of colour; arising from the

union of rock and foliage, and from the infinite variety of fern, lichens, and mosses, that overspread its banks.

The lower lake is preferred by some, to the two others ; and although I do not coincide in this opinion, I willingly concede to it merits of a very high order. Its chief character is beauty ; and certainly a spot of more loveliness than Glenna, it would be difficult to find. It is a little cove, at the head of the lower lake ; and here Lady Kenmare has built her a pleasure-house, on a gentle swell, with the freshest of verdure and the sweetest of shrubs and flowers around ; and set, like an emerald, in the bosom of deep towering woods. Another cottage, at a little distance, has been erected by Lord Kenmare, for the use of strangers ; and although I am rather inclined to look upon a picnic as a good dinner spoiled, yet, in such a spot as this, the calamity might be endured.

One of the most beautiful islands on any of the lakes, or, I might perhaps say, on any lake, is Innisfallen. Never saw I such ash-trees as are here,—never such magnificent hollies. A walk round this little paradise well repays one. Although the island contains scarcely twenty acres, it offers a wonderful variety of scenery : little emerald lawns—forest glades in miniature—sylvan amphitheatres—groves, bowers, and thickets of evergreens, and flowering shrubs—and magnificent single trees, worthy of a primeval forest. There is an old ruin too, on the island, and a banqueting-house erected for the accommodation of strangers ; and, when I saw it, it was prepared for a banquet. Lord Kenmare is the owner of Innisfallen ; and also of Ross Island, another large and beautiful island on the lower lake. In speaking of Killarney, I must not forget its echoes. I had the advantage of having, in my boat, the prince of Killarney buglemen, and I had also a cannon of a larger calibre than the public boats carry ; and, in the course of our voyage, we often woke the echoes of the hills, and I never heard echoes in greater perfection. There is, certainly, something bordering on the sublime, in the oft-repeated echoes of the mountains, even when these are awoken, not by the deep-mouthed thunder, but by the sonorous

bugle. The hills seem, alike, to call to each other; and, although it would have puzzled Burke to trace the emotion of sublimity to terror, it may be traced to its truer origin—power; for—when we hear the call repeated and answered, from mountain to mountain—sometimes loud, and without interval, and then fainter and fainter—and, after a solemn pause, again rising, as if from some far-distant glen—our imagination endues the mountains with life; and to their attributes of magnitude, and silence, and solitude, we, for a moment, add the power of listening, and a voice.

It will not be irrelevant to say a few words, in this place, of the comparative merits of the English and the Irish lakes.

Although the lakes of Killarney are three in number, yet they are all contained in one mountain hollow; and certainly there is not, within the same compass, any thing in England presenting the same concentration of charms. There is infinitely greater variety at Killarney. In form, and in the outline of its mountain boundaries, the lower lake of Killarney is decidedly superior to Winandermere: and although the head of Ulleswater presents a bolder outline than is anywhere to be found at Killarney; yet it is upon this outline alone, that the reputation of Ulleswater depends. Elsewhere than at Patterdale, the lake scenery is tame; and the same may be said of Winandermere, which, towards its lower extremity, is almost devoid of attraction. On the contrary, throughout the whole chain of lakes, there is a variety at Killarney: tameness is no where to be found; and I cannot think that the somewhat nearer approach to sublimity which is found at the head of Ulleswater, can weigh in the balance against the far greater variety in the picturesque and the beautiful, which Killarney affords. It would be unfair to compare the lakes of Killarney, with Winandermere, Keswick, and Ulleswater; for these are spread over a great extent of country; whereas, the lakes of Killarney are all contained within a smaller circumference than Winandermere: but even if such a comparison were to be admitted, Killarney would outvie the English lakes in one charm, in

which they are essentially deficient. I mean, the exuberance and variety of foliage which adorns both the banks and the islands of the Killarney lakes. Such islands as Ronan's Island, Oak Island, Dinas Island, and Innisfallen, covered with magnificent timber and gigantic evergreens, are nowhere to be found amongst the English lakes. I think it will be gathered from what I have said, that I accord the preference to Killarney.

No one must visit Killarney, without seeing Muckross Abbey. It is a very beautiful and very perfect remain,—and contains within it the most gigantic yew tree I have ever seen. Its arms actually support the crumbling wall, and form a canopy above the open cloisters: the trunk of this majestic yew measures thirteen feet in circumference. I was somewhat shocked with the want of propriety observed in the management of this spot. Human skulls in hundreds, and bones in thousands, are heaped in every corner: and at each step, it is more than likely that one will kick some eyeless relic of mortality. The domain of Muckross is beautiful: it lies along the shores of the lower lake, and its shady walks are adorned by innumerable blossoming shrubs; amongst others, the rose of Sharon, and the gum-cistus.

The domain of the Earl of Kenmare is altogether lovely. Its lake, and mountain views, and vistas, are beyond praise. I think I have never beheld anything more captivating, than the vista from the dining-room windows, when the declining sun, streaming from above the mountain tops, falls slanting on the lake, and on the bright velvet lawn that stretches to its shore.

CHAPTER X.

Journey through the Wilds of Kerry—Castlemain Bay—Killorglin—Lord Heally's Estate—Sea Views—O'Connell's Country—The Agitator in his own Country—The Grand Jury Bill—An Anecdote—Cahir-siveen—Condition of the Landholders—Intelligence of the Kerry Peasantry—Examples—Valentia Island—Voyage across the Bay of Dingle—Dingle, and the Condition of the People—Peculiarities of the Inhabitants of this District—Extreme early Marriages—The Catholic Clergy, and proposed Provision for them—Brandon Bay—The Tithe Question—Journey to Trillick.

My course now lay through the wilds of Kerry; and first, to Cahir-siveen, and Valentia Island; which, with the exception of the little islands called the Blaskets, is the nearest point of Ireland to the coast of America. The distance from Killarney to Cahir-siveen, which, on the maps, is generally marked Cahir, is about forty English miles, and the road is altogether a very interesting one; both on account of the scenery through which the traveller passes, and on account of the peculiarities that attach to the people of these parts, which are said to have been colonized by Spanish settlers, and which long held a close intercourse with the Peninsula.

The first few miles of the road I had already passed over, in exploring the beauties of Killarney; and till reaching Milltown, there is not much to interest the traveller, excepting the glimpses of the lakes, which are caught from every eminence one passes. Milltown is a very poor town; the property of

Sir George Godfrey; who, from all that I could learn, has more the will than the power of benefiting it. Beyond Milltown, the view opens finely, over the upper part of Dingle Bay and Castlemain: and soon after, I reached the town of Killorglin; the property of the Mullins family,—and a still poorer place than Milltown. Beyond this town, the road continually increases in interest. The Iveragh range of mountains rises boldly on the left; and a lake, called Lough Carracht, is seen with one end buried among the steepes, and the other approaching near to the road. A little farther on, the road enters, and traverses for several miles, an extensive bog, also the property of the Mullins, or Ventry family. I never saw a bog better situated for improvement: it lies close to the bay of Dingle, and at a considerable elevation above it; and at the distance of but a few miles, there is a plentiful supply of limestone; and abundance of sea-sand close at hand. Yet, with the exception of that part of the bog which belongs to Judge Dey, it is entirely neglected, and nearly profitless. Judge Dey has the universal character of being an excellent and enterprising landowner; and, judging by what I saw, I have no doubt, that if this bog were all his property, it would long ago have been covered with luxuriant crops of grain and potatoes.

It is on this road also, where lies that estate of Lord Headly,—so well known by the evidence of Mr. Nimmo before the House of Commons. The exertions made to reclaim that land, and the success which attended them, have been so fully detailed in that evidence, that any imperfect notices of mine are unnecessary. I saw land, which had formerly owned but the dominion of the sea, bearing fine crops of every description; and I saw a population, which before the exertions of Lord Headly, was little removed from savage, comfortably housed and clothed, and exhibiting more certain indications of civilization, than are often to be met in the most fertile and central parts of Ireland. In a little bay here, Lord Headly has erected some neat bathing-cottages, which are much frequented during the summer. His lord-

ship has an extensive property in this neighbourhood; and it every where exhibits those symptoms of improvement which might be expected.

Nothing can be finer than the road skirting the sea, after leaving Lord Headly's property. In the magnificence of its mountain and sea views, it is little inferior to any of the celebrated roads which have been constructed along the shores of the Mediterranean; and is every way superior to the road from Bangor to Conway, in North Wales. I am sorry I cannot say so much for the population and their dwellings. I never passed more wretched cabins, than on some part of this road. Some of the worst of these are situated on the property of Lord Lansdowne, but are held under his lordship, by middle-men.

I was now in O'Connell's country: here was the property of Daniel O'Connell, Esq., or the Liberator, as the people called him; there, the property of Charles O'Connell, Esq.; and there again, the property of another O'Connell: but the greater part of the O'Connell property—almost all that of *the* O'Connell—is held under head landlords; and he, is only an extensive middle-man. Near to Cahir-siveen is the birth-place of the great Agitator. It is a ruined house, situated in a hollow near to the road; and when I reached the spot, the driver of the car pulled up, and inquired whether I would like to visit the house. But the driver of my car was not a native of these parts; for be it known to the reader, that O'Connell is less popular in his own country than he is elsewhere. If you ask an innkeeper, or an innkeeper's wife, any where in O'Connell's district, what sort of a man their landlord is? "Och, and sure he's the best of landlords!—he takes the childer by the hand, and he wouldn't be over proud to dthrink tay with the landlady." But if you step into a cabin, the owner of which owns Daniel O'Connell, Esq. as his landlord; and if you ask the same question, he'll scratch his head, and say little any way. Shortly before I visited Cahir-siveen, there was a road-presentation in that neighbourhood, and the rate-payers, who have now a vote in these matters, re-

fused at first to pass it, unless the O'Connells would pay two-thirds of the expense; because, said they, "the O'Connells have lived long enough out of road-presentations!!"

As I have mentioned this subject, I will add, that I have reason to know, from unquestionable authority, that before the late Grand Jury Bill was enacted—that is, up to the present time—there had been much shameful grand jury jobbing in many of the Irish counties: particularly in Tipperary, Clare, Limerick, Kerry, and Roscommon. A grand juror of Tipperary called one morning, previous to the holding of the quarter sessions, upon a brother grand juror—a man, however, of much greater influence than himself,—and pulling out, and unfolding voluminous plans and papers, began to explain the advantages which would accrue to the public, from the construction of a certain road through his, the expounder's property. "Put your papers in your pocket, man," said the man of influence: "say nothing about the public advantage. I'll just say, it's a little job of my own;" and so things were managed. There can be no doubt that, in some respects, the Bill will work most advantageously for the public service, and most fatally for jobbers. It cannot be denied, however, that there will be exceptions from its benefits. A few days later, when I was at Tralee, a presentment account was opposed by several magistrates, on the ground that the road had not been repaired as it ought to have been; that the money had been mis-spent, and that the road was at that moment in a bad condition. The rate payers, however, being the majority, passed the account: because, said they, although the road might not be good enough for their Honours' springed carriages, it answered very well for them. Neither has the late Act at all removed the evils of the Grand Jury Assessment. There is great and manifest injustice in many provisions of the Grand Jury Assessment Act; and particularly in this,—that the expenses of permanent improvements are laid upon the occupier of the land, and not upon the owners.

I reached O'Connell's town, Cahir-siveen, in time for an

excellent fish dinner of haddock and mullet; and the three or four hours that intervened between dinner and bed time, I spent in rambling about the environs of the village, and in the neighbouring country. The town is said to be rather improving; though, from its situation, I cannot think the improvement can ever be great; for it lies within a very dangerous navigation, high up the stream, which there forms an inlet of the sea; and in strong westerly winds, the only safe entrance, between the mainland and Valentia Island, is all but inaccessible.

The country around Cahir-siveen is extremely wild, and but very partially reclaimed: and the condition of the people far from being comfortable. I visited several wretched cabins, and found the inmates paying exorbitant rents. Land is not let here by the acre; but by the quantity of land fit to support a cow. I found one man owning land for six cows, paying at the rate of 50s. per cow; and at that time, the price of butter was such, that not more than 40s. could be got for the produce of each cow. Others, I found paying in precisely the same proportion. The greater industry of the people—and, I may add, the greater intelligence, universal among the Kerry peasantry—help them with their indifferent bargains. I saw in many of their cabins, beautiful examples of industry—every branch of a family occupied in doing something useful; and I did not address one individual, from whom I did not receive answers, that would have done credit to persons of any education; and yet, on asking one individual who had conversed with me readily and sensibly upon many subjects, how many weeks there were in a month,—I was answered, that there were two. Nature has done much for these people—education little.

Walking along a mountain path, I overtook a girl of about fourteen or fifteen years' old—I speak by guess, for it is rarely in this country that a girl can tell her age. She carried a basket, in which were from four to five dozen of eggs. I asked where she had got the eggs? She had been round the country buying them cheap.—Where was she taking

them to? She was going to send them, and some dozens more, with Mich O'Sullivan's carts, to Cork.—Upon whose account was she buying the eggs? On her own.—On her own account? Yes.—Who gave her the money? The parson (she was a Protestant) had lent it to her: some time ago, her cousin had sent a basket of eggs with Mich O'Sullivan, to Cork, and he had made three shillings.—This was certainly a curious example of enterprise and industry. I returned into the town with the girl, and saw her father: he was a small landholder; and he said, Biddy went, after her day's work was done, and merchandized for herself.

The views about Cahir-siveen are interesting—of a wild and solitary character. The mountains jut into the sea on every side; the island of Valentia lies opposite, separated from the main land, by a narrow channel: and the small town, enclosed among the brown mountain slopes, seems like a place at the world's end.

The next day I visited Valentia Island: but my visit to it was a hurried one; for the navigation of Dingle Bay is safe only in fine weather; and being anxious to reach Ennis at the opening of the Clare assizes, it was necessary that I should take advantage of the favourable weather to cross the bay to Dingle. A great part of Valentia Island is under tillage; and there is a considerable range of pasture. The houses of the tenants, I found of a superior description; but their internal comforts scarcely corresponded; for land is high let. Nearly all, if not all the island, belongs to the Knight of Kerry, who is much respected in this neighbourhood; and who has done considerable service to the place—not so much by outlay of money, as by example, in various modes of improvement. The slate quarry on the island is extensive and valuable, and is at present in the Knight of Kerry's own hands; and is worked for export. It is used for flagging, for fish slabs, and for many purposes to which marble has been usually applied; and finds a ready market in England. Several good houses are scattered over Valentia Island, besides those of the farmers. The house of the Knight is

situated near to the sea, on an eminence, on the east side of the island, and near to a little glen, and small rivulet.

I returned from Valentia Island to Cahir-siveen, just in time to save the tide, and embarked in a heavy fishing-boat, which was about to return to Dingle. With a smart breeze the voyage may be accomplished in two hours, but I had no such good fortune. There was scarcely a breath of wind, and we were forced to row the whole way; sometimes, indeed, profiting by the brief course of a passing breeze to hoist our sail; but losing more than we gained, by the suspension of rowing. This must, indeed, be a frightful navigation with a heavy rolling sea before an Atlantic north-wester; and, being only desirous of reaching Dingle before night-fall, I did not regret the slowness of our progress, and the tranquillity of the sea, which encouraged a more leisurely observation of the fine scenery that lay on every side. The tide did not permit us to steer directly for Dingle; and, accordingly, we made the opposite shore, considerably to the west, and then rowed under the rocks, eastward, passing in succession Ventry Harbour, numerous bold headlands, and singularly formed rocks, and many curious sea-worn caves, never visited but by the sea-fowl, that are congregated in thousands along this coast,—riding on the wave, covering the rocks, and wheeling on the sides of the cliffs. I noticed many varieties of sea-fowl: some were of the purest white; some were white, all but the tips of the wings; and some were speckled-bodied, with red feet and bills.

Dingle harbour is what sailors call a blind harbour; that is, a harbour that, from the sea, is not discovered to be a harbour. It is exceedingly difficult to make this haven during a strong westerly wind; and vessels passing it by, and running to the eastward, are infallibly lost on Castlemain bar. When once entered, however, Dingle harbour is a very secure one. A vessel of six hundred tons' burden may go up to the pier, with a spring tide; and vessels of any tonage may find secure anchorage within the inlet.

The town of Dingle is situated on the slope of the hills,

with fine, and very high mountains round it on all sides, excepting one, where the sea forms a large inland lake. It is rather a good-looking town. The number of respectable houses is much greater than one would expect to find in so small and remote a place; and good gardens are generally attached to them; so that, viewed from a distance, the town appears to be well screened with wood. But Dingle is not a flourishing town. A thriving linen trade was once carried on here; and no trade is so beneficial as this, in giving employment to different descriptions of persons. But this trade is entirely fallen, and has not been replaced by any other. There is, however, a considerable and an increasing export trade in corn and butter. About ten cargoes, averaging each two hundred tons, leave Dingle yearly, with corn and butter, for British ports. The town enjoys also a tolerable retail trade. The neighbouring country, as well as Cahirsiveen, and the opposite side of the bay, are supplied from Dingle; and one or two dealers lay in their stocks themselves, direct from England. There is also a considerable fishery at Dingle:—upwards of fifty fishing boats, with about 350 men, afford the means of support to about 1200 persons. Dingle supplies Tralee market with the finer kinds of fish; and fish-hucksters traffic regularly, with horses, between Dingle and Tralee.

I found a considerable number of unemployed persons in and about Dingle, and labour extremely cheap. Sixpence a day, and seven-pence at most, is the usual rate without diet; and it is the universal practice, in this part of the country, to work, during the summer, from five in the morning until seven in the evening. The provisions of the poor, however, are cheap here. I found potatoes only $2\frac{1}{4}$ d. a stone.

The land around Dingle is in a very indifferent condition, as regards the occupiers. A great part of it is the property of the Mullins family, held under a trust, created by a former Lord Ventry, and is badly managed. Tenants occupy miserably small lots; and being unable to live on the produce

of their land, go half the year a begging, or in search of employment. Fuel, too, is scarce in this country; but the facility of catching fish perhaps counterbalances this disadvantage.

The Peninsula, or stripe of land, reaching from Tralee, westward, to the Atlantic, of which Dingle is the chief town, is said to have been colonized from Spain; and, in many respects, the people yet retain strong traces of their origin. Here, we see women with dark hair and jet black eyes—and dark brown-headed boys, that might have served as a study for Murillo—and men, whose gait and complexion only require to be set off by a Spanish hat, jacket, and girdle, to pass for bandits of Andalusia. Nor is the resemblance visible only in the aspect of the people; I fancied I discovered more pride, and more reserve; and, in a quarrel which I chanced to see, there was less vociferation, and, as it seemed to me, a graver deportment than I had elsewhere observed. But this might possibly be fancy: it is certain, however, that the features of many of the people are decidedly Spanish; and in the names of places, a Spanish origin may often be traced.

Marriages in this district are contracted at an earlier age than in any part that I had yet visited. Fourteen and thirteen, are common ages for the marriage of girls; fifteen is not considered at all an early age for marriage; and there are even instances of their having been contracted at so early an age as twelve. This is, on many accounts, a great and public evil; and among the benefits which might be expected to be derived from the assignment, under cautious regulation, of some government provision for the Catholic clergy, the discouragement of early marriages would certainly be one. It is well known that marriage is among the most fruitful sources of profit to the priest; and if the abolition of baptismal and marriage dues were made consequent upon such a provision as I have alluded to, it would be no longer the interest of the priest to encourage or countenance—as it is certain he

often does—the unwise, and almost criminally early marriages of the peasantry. I am far from meaning to say that such encouragement is universal; I know, however, that it is frequent; and the Catholic priest, who betters his condition by the marriages of his flock, would be committing an act of rare virtue were he not merely neutral, but were even to discourage early marriage. At all events, it appears to me, that men's interests ought never to be placed in opposition to the public good; and that—if legislation can prevent this—legislators are bound to apply the remedy. I will mention another advantage which would certainly result from such a provision for the Catholic clergy. It would encourage a more respectable class of men to become members of the priesthood; and this would essentially contribute towards the peace of the country. The warmest defenders of the Catholic clergy would admit, that many are utterly disqualified from exercising judiciously, and in a spirit suited to the times, the functions of their calling, owing to the sphere of life from which they have been taken: and, that some certain provision by way of glebe, or otherwise, would tempt a better order of men to enter the priesthood, cannot I think admit of the smallest doubt. I may probably recur to this subject: at present, I shall only add, that I would look for benefit from the provision alluded to, rather in its results upon early marriage, and in the encouragement it would give to a better order of clergy, than in the effect which some suppose it would have, in diminishing the influence of the priesthood.

The inns, in this part of the country, put me in mind of those I had seen in the Engadine. The houses are very spacious; and the keeping of the inn is only one branch of the business of the inn-keeper. Both at Cahir-siveen, and at Dingle, the inn-keeper kept an extensive shop for the sale of groceries, and of all kinds of cloth and haberdashery goods.

Before leaving Dingle, I crossed the mountains to the heights above Brandon Bay, which lies on the north side of the Peninsula. It was a long and fatiguing ascent; but it was

repaid by the very striking and extensive view from Connor's Hill, from which you look down upon the sea on both sides : the view on one side embracing Dingle Bay, as far as Valentia Island, with the town and fine harbour immediately below ; and on the other side, comprehending Brandon Bay, and various fine headlands, with high mountains on both sides, and deep and wide mountain valleys ; and innumerable tarns, dark and still, lying in the hollows of the hills ; and distant cascades, and nearer torrents ; and all, in short, that lends interest to mountain scenery.

Returning from this excursion, I remarked some bog land brought newly into a state of partial cultivation ; and upon making some inquiries, I was told that this was done, because no tithe would in future be exigible from it. There and everywhere I have yet travelled, I have found the tithe question a difficult one to grapple with. Utterly and at once to extinguish tithes, every one in Ireland admits, would be only making a present to the landlord ; and any adjustment that leaves it in the landlord's power to shift the burden from himself, would confer little benefit on those for whom it is intended. Even, however, if the landlord should succeed in laying the addition upon the rent, it is better that the tenant should pay the charges upon his possession in a lump, than by separate demands : and that all the charges should be exigible by the landlord : a farmer could better calculate the amount he had to pay ; and would know when to be prepared ; and as it cannot be the true interest of the landlord unnecessarily to distress a good tenant, more indulgence might in general be expected from him, than from the inexorable tithe-proctor.

After spending an interesting day or two at Dingle, I left it for Tralee. The road traverses the mountains, diagonally, from the Dingle to the Tralee side ; and leads the traveller through an improving country, and through scenery of a highly attractive character. Several inconsiderable villages are passed through : a gap, far superior to the gap of Dunlow,

is seen on the left, with a fine lake half hidden in it ; and from the summit of the mountain ridge, a splendid prospect opens over Tralee Bay, across to Kerry Head, and the Shannon Mouth. I reached Tralee a little before dusk, and found the streets and every inn crowded,—for the quarter sessions had opened the day before : but I succeeded in finding comfortable lodgings.

CHAPTER XI.

Tralee—The Quarter Sessions in Tralee—The Civil and Criminal Cause—List—State of Kerry—Faction—The Police of Ireland—Litigiousness of the Irish—Prosperity of Tralee Trade—Prices of Provisions—Unemployed Poor—Journey to Listowel and Tarbert—Traits of Character—First View of the Shannon—Details—Tarbert, and the Shores of the Shannon—Irish Inns of the West—Steam Navigation on the Shannon—Ascent of the Shannon to Limerick—Road to Ennis—Clare, and the River Fergus—Ennis—Land, and High Rents—Environs of Ennis.

I HAVE no hesitation in pronouncing Tralee, the county town of Kerry, to be altogether the most thriving town I have seen since leaving Clonmel ; and, in some respects, it leaves Clonmel behind it. Tralee has streets that would not disgrace the best quarters of any city ; and these, not streets of business, which it also has,—but streets containing gentlemen's houses, or, at all events, houses which no gentleman might be ashamed to live in.

I have said, that I arrived at Tralee when the quarter sessions were about to be held : and I did not neglect the opportunity afforded me : for, upon no occasion, is so much insight obtained at so small an expenditure of time and labour, into the character of the peasantry ; and even into the state of the country. Being accommodated with a seat on the bench, I had better opportunity for observation, and for noting the proceedings.

The first thing that strikes a stranger, attending a court of this kind in Ireland, is the military air of the place,—the armed police in military uniform, guarding the avenues, and stationed throughout the court. The next thing that strikes one, is the intense interest that seems to be excited among the people. But I soon found that there were other and more important subjects of wonder than these. This was a quarter session for one half of the county of Kerry; and can the reader guess how many civil causes were to be disposed of? There were *fourteen hundred and seventy causes* entered for judgment; and the assistant barrister informed me, that this was not considered a heavy list. Seventy-seven of this number were ejectments; and the tremendous remainder was chiefly made up of breaches of contract,—indicating, I fear, at the same time, a woeful lack of veracity and just dealing: and a most indomitable spirit of litigiousness.

Nor was I less struck, nor do I believe the reader will be less struck, with the list of criminal cases handed to me. The following was the classification:—

Assault	47
Riotous Assembly	74
Aggravated Assault	1
Rescue	34
Rescue Decree	21
Larceny	10
Embezzlement	4
Taking and retaking forcible possession	4
Libel	1
Injury to the Freehold	3
In all	199

One hundred and ninety-nine criminal cases at a quarter sessions, for one half of the remote and quiet county of Kerry!! and of these, *one hundred and seventy-four* cases implying the undue exercise of physical force!! But it is necessary that I should here enlarge a little. In England, when we speak of a disturbed county, we mean, a county in which there are movements directed to some particular purpose,—or arising

out of opposition to some particular law,—or insurrectionary movements; and I have not the least doubt, that if, in Parliament, the condition of the west of Ireland were spoken of, it would be said to be perfectly tranquil; and we might, probably, have tirades against the large and expensive police establishment kept up in a quiet country, of which the county of Kerry might be cited as an example. But to call a county quiet, in one half of which, during three months, there have been seventy-four examples of riotous assembly, and fifty-five cases of rescue,—together with nearly fifty cases of personal assault, is a perversion of words. These assemblies are not, indeed, assemblies of white-feet, or peep-of-day boys; nor are they directed against the collection of tithes,—or of rent,—nor have in view any express political purpose;—and so far, indeed, they are less important than if they had any of these objects;—but they are riots for all that,—disturbances of the peace,—assemblages of persons who fight with each other, and maim each other, and kill each other; and no one, but through the grossest ignorance of Ireland, or to serve party purposes, would speak of the present police of Ireland, otherwise than in terms of the highest commendation, and as a force at present absolutely requisite to prevent the complete disorganization of society—even if there were no agitators, and Ireland had no elements of political or agrarian agitation. I have no hesitation in saying, that for putting down these private factions, out of which arise the disgraceful and savage brutalities that are often perpetrated by wholesale, legislation is just as requisite as it is for any more specific purpose. These factions, which are not understood in England, create far more disturbance, and far more bloodshed, than any of the associations entered into for illegal purposes. I was in this county at the time of the memorable affair of Balybunian, when nearly two-score persons were driven into the Shannon, and drowned, and knocked on the head like so many dogs; and will anybody say, that premeditated fights of this kind, solemnly resolved upon months before, do not require as vigorous an intervention of the law, as any disturbance aris-

ing out of a tithe distraining ? Where magistrates are afraid to act, and witnesses dare not swear ; and where, in one reputed quiet county, more riots, attended with loss of life, take place in one month, than in all England and Scotland for a year, it is surely idle to talk of the expense of a police.

But let me observe, that the causes of these disturbances are the same as those which answer to the call of political agitation—imperfect civilization, and want of employment. Education, employment for the people, and a vigorous administration of the law, will dissolve the elements of these, as well as of all disturbance ; and although at this moment, a strong police is absolutely requisite to maintain in Ireland anything like order and decorum, I have as little doubt, that healing measures, coupled with an extensive and practicable system of education, will gradually diminish the necessity for coercion of any kind. Let government continue to act with moderation ; let the tithe question be settled ; let the extremes of all parties be discouraged ; let Irish interests be not sacrificed to a too paltry economy ; let the infirm and the aged poor be cared for ; let the superabundant labour of Ireland be thrown upon her wastes ; let public works be encouraged ; let agitation for all dishonest purposes be firmly met, and agitators scorned ; let the church be wisely, but thoroughly, reformed ; let, in short, the government continue to show—what the people of England already give it credit for—a sympathy with the real evils of the country, and a determination,—spite of landlords—spite of church dignitaries—spite of agitators of all kinds—to do justice ; let all this be, and Ireland will continue but a little while longer the distracted, poverty-stricken, crushed, and unhappy land, which a century of neglect and misgovernment has made it.

The litigiousness of the Irish peasantry is most remarkable ; and I am inclined to think that litigiousness is encouraged by the frequency of holding sessions. Law seems to be always at hand ; and it accustoms the people too much to these exhibitions ; it is a fact, that where petty sessions have been made less frequent, the quantity of business has greatly

diminished. A calculation was made for me, by a gentleman well acquainted with these matters, of the number of cases of all kinds tried in the county of Kerry during a year: and upon a fair average of cases tried at each of the petty sessions and manor courts, the whole number amounted to the enormous sum of 33,000. Wherever I have seen the quarter sessions in Ireland, it has impressed me favourably; and I doubt whether the contemplated alterations will be beneficial. I am strongly inclined to be of opinion, however, that the peace of Ireland would be greatly preserved by the establishment of a paid magistracy. Local connexion is inimical to the steady and fearless administration of justice; and it is a fact, that strangers, brought into office as police inspectors, have more influence among the people, and can effect more, than the magistrates who have been always resident among them.

The indications of prosperity visible in the outward appearance of Tralee, I found, upon inquiry, to be just indications. Twenty years ago, Tralee was little else than a congregation of cabins; and within a far shorter period, it has received—as a merchant of the town expressed it—its new face.

From September, 1833, till May, 1834 (eight months), 4000 tons of wheat were exported from Tralee, 3000 tons of oats, and 400 tons of barley. Besides this very considerable quantity there was bought in the market for home consumption, 1000 tons of wheat, 70 tons of oats, and 4000 tons of barley. Since the year 1825, the corn export trade of Tralee has increased about one-third; and the home trade, about one-fifth. The butter export trade of Tralee used to be considerable; but it is greatly on the decline,—scarcely one-twentieth part of the quantity being now exported, comparatively with the year 1825.

The retail trade of Tralee is an extensive and improving one; and many of the dealers are wealthy. As good shops are to be found in Tralee as in Cork; and the stock, in many of them, is very extensive. A ship canal is now con-

structing from the bay to the town; but its probable utility is doubted by many. It is thought that the strong westerly gales which blow into the bay will accumulate sand in the canal, and obstruct navigation.

I was at Tralee on market day, and I never recollect to have seen a busier place. Independently of an extensive supply of country produce, there was a very abundant exhibition of all kinds of manufactured goods and apparel; and every shop in the town was crowded to the door.

The following are the prices of some articles of provision in Tralee. Beef averages 3*d.* per lb.; mutton, 3½*d.*; pork, 2*d.*; a fine turkey, in the season, costs 1*s.* 9*d.*; a fine goose, 10*d.*; and fine fowls, 8*d.* a couple; a good codfish can be bought for about 8*d.*; and oysters are 3*d.* a dozen; potatoes, when I was at Tralee, in the scarce season, were 3*d.* per stone. Servants' wages are very low in this neighbourhood. A man servant does not receive more than 8*l.*, and a female servant never more than 3*l.*; and often as little as 2*l.*, and even 30*s.* House-rent in Tralee is high,—higher than in any English county town: but a little way out of Tralee, it is moderate enough. A gentlemen, whom I visited, had an excellent house, somewhat more than two miles from Tralee, beautifully situated on the bay, with spacious out-houses, and with ten English acres of good land, for which he paid 45*l.* Estimating the land at 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre, (for land around Tralee lets high,) he paid 20*l.* for his house and its accommodations.

The town of Tralee is the property of Sir Edward Denny: he grants leases on lives, renewable for ever; but it is not in his power to let ground at a lower rate than 10*l.* an acre. He is also the chief proprietor of the surrounding country: but the occupying tenants chiefly hold under middle-men, who extract the utmost rent that competition can produce. I will take this opportunity of saying, that a gradual reduction of rents in Ireland is to be expected from the system, now so general among landowners, of getting quit of middle-men at expired leases. Landlords, I think, are beginning to

see their interest more clearly in this matter; and if, as I earnestly hope may speedily be the case, some legislative enactment compels, or at least encourages, the cultivation of waste lands, and the employment of the able-bodied labourer on public works, competition for land will gradually diminish; and rents will at length find their just level.

I found at Tralee a greater number of unemployed poor, than, from the prosperity of the town, I could have expected. But the recent improvements in building houses, and in the erection of a new court-house, which is every way a handsome and commodious structure, attracted a large supply of labour to the town; and these being now almost completed, the demand has ceased. The canal indeed employs many; but wages are extremely low; and in this rainy climate, it often happens that the labourers, after working in the canal from five in the morning until eleven in the forenoon, are discharged for the day with the pittance of twopence; and thus these men and their families are made paupers for that day.

There is a spa in the neighbourhood of Tralee, considerably resorted to for its waters; the situation of the place is pleasant; and a number of pretty country-houses have been erected in the vicinity.

It was the evening of market day, when I left Tralee for Listowel. I was seated on the mail car; and as the streets were thronged with carts and people, a little boy marched before, blowing a trumpet; while the driver, with an air of extraordinary importance, stood up in his seat, and from one end of the street to the other, bawled out to the "boys" and the "gentlemen" to make room for his majesty's mail coach.

The country between Tralee and Listowel is naturally fertile, with here and there some bog land, which might be made fertile. The children whom I saw standing about the cabin doors, or tending the pigs or goats, appeared altogether regardless of covering; several I noticed with nothing but shirts, apparently unconscious that clothes were any comfort: and one boy, with neither shirt, nor any nether garments

whatever—with nothing but a jacket, and a great rose stuck in the button-hole, could not but excite a smile.

Listowel is approached by crossing a long bridge over the river Feale. The town is but a poor one; but as it was late when I reached it, and not having it in my power to stay longer than that night, owing to the necessity of reaching Ennis, I had no leisure for inquiries.

I left Listowel at a very early hour, for Tarbert, that, if necessary, I might cross the Shannon into Clare the same day. An early journey sometimes shows a traveller what he could not see at a later hour. Some of the cabins by the way side were still closed; and the inmates of others had newly opened their doors. It was Sunday morning; and I observed that the articles of apparel meant to be displayed at mass, and which had been washed the night before, had been left on the hedges all night—a practice that speaks favourably for the honesty of the people. I observed also, that many of the Kerry peasantry in this district were not so poor as, from the appearance of their cabins, one might have guessed them to be. Out of one cabin, a calf might be seen picking its way; a couple of goats issuing from another; while within, might be seen and heard the cocks and hens, which had not yet been turned out to earn their day's bread.

It was this morning that, for the first time, I saw that noblest of all rivers in the British European dominions—the Shannon. It was impossible to look upon the Shannon without feeling deeply interested; and this for many reasons. I knew it to be the greatest of all our rivers; I knew it to be a great artery, by means of which, improvement might be carried, and capital circulated, through the remotest parts of Ireland: I saw it to be in itself a noble stream, rivalling the finest of the continental rivers; and an additional interest was communicated to it, from the belief that, to my countrymen, that part of Ireland lying to the west of the Shannon is a *terra incognita*.

But as I shall, for some time, have frequent occasion to speak of the Shannon, and as it will be our companion during

a considerable part of this journey, I will here speak a little more in detail of this noble river; and, in doing so, I shall not scruple to avail myself of the valuable information given by Mr. Williams, in a pamphlet published by him, upon the internal navigation of Ireland.

The source of the Shannon is reputed to be Loch Allen: but some say, and I have no doubt those who say so are right, that Loch Allen has its feeders, and they therefore, though incorrectly perhaps, place the source of the Shannon higher than Loch Allen. By and by, I shall visit Loch Allen, and shall probably then be able to tell more accurately which is the source of the Shannon. The course of the river is two hundred and thirty-four miles; and the most singular feature about this great river is, that throughout its whole course, it possesses a sufficient depth of water for the purposes of internal intercourse. With some trifling interruptions, it is navigable from its mouth to its source. The other singular characteristic of this river is, its extraordinary diversity. It is partly river, and partly lake. In the upper part of its course, it expands into two great lakes, Lough Derg, and Lough Ree, each of them twenty miles in length, and forms, in its course from Leitrim to Limerick, many smaller lakes, varying from one to three miles in length. Below Limerick, to the sea, a distance of sixty miles, it forms a magnificent estuary, varying in breadth from one to eight miles, and capable of bearing to the quay of Limerick a vessel of 400 tons burden. The whole fall of the river amounts to 146 feet 10 inches. Mr. Williams says, "From the circumstance of the Shannon running through the centre of the kingdom, it may be compared, for the purposes of intercourse, to double that length of coast."

The Shannon washes the shores of no fewer than ten counties,—Leitrim, Roscommon, Longford, Westmeath, King's County, Galway, Tipperary, Clare, Limerick, and Kerry.

"How," says Mr. Williams, "can we convey to English eyes, the picture of the Shannon through its great course?" The fact is, there is nothing more required than to glance at

a good map of Ireland, in order to obtain a tolerable notion of the nature and extent of this noble river, and of its value as a means of improvement. I trust the reader will become better acquainted with the Shannon, as he proceeds with me on my journey: and that when we stand together near to its source, we shall almost be able to write a pamphlet on it ourselves. Prefixed to this work a chart of the course of the Shannon, reduced from Mr. Williams' map, and with some additions of my own, will materially assist the reader.

It was on approaching Tarbert, that I ran into this digression on the Shannon. I now resume my narrative.

Tarbert is a very small town, situated at the head of a little bay of the Shannon, which, from the entrance to Tarbert Bay, to the nearest point of the opposite coast of Clare, is about two and a half miles broad. Tarbert Bay is prettily wooded; and the banks of the river, below Tarbert, are adorned by several handsome seats. It was Sunday, and I had an opportunity of seeing the peasantry of this neighbourhood, with holiday looks, and holiday clothes. I saw more incongruity of apparel here than I had anywhere else seen, and a greater partiality for gaudy colours. Red petticoats, and bright yellow shawls, were much in vogue; and so smart were the women's caps, that every hood was thrown back, to let them be seen. It was singular enough to see some tolerably neat holiday apparel, accompanied by bare feet and legs; I fear it was not the will that consented—for although it is no doubt often matter of choice go barefooted, yet this certainly could not have been the case on Sunday.

I have already spoken of the goodness of the Irish inns. My remarks, however, were made before I had travelled into the remoter parts of the country; and when I remarked to any Irish person, that I had found the inns better than I expected, I was told to suspend my judgment until I had visited the less frequented parts of the country. I have now travelled through the remotest extremities of the wilds of Kerry; and I find no reason to retract the opinion I expressed. At

Kenmare, at Cahir-siveen, at Dingle, at Listowel, and now at Tarbert, I found comfortable and clean inns. I have at this inn, a well and newly carpeted room, with good mahogany chairs, three excellent mahogany tables, a handsome glass over the chimney-piece, clean chintz window-curtains, white blinds, and the walls of the room well papered. My bedroom is as unexceptionable; and every thing is comfortably served up at table. Prices continue nearly the same; dinner is generally charged 2s., tea 1s., breakfast 1s. 3d., bed 1s. 8d., and whiskey 5d. per glass, with water and sugar.

I spent the afternoon in walking five or six miles down the shore of the Shannon, as far as Ardmore point. The evening was remarkably fine, and the atmosphere clear; so that the whole of the opposite coast of Clare, as far as Kilrush, was beautifully distinct; and I was able even to see clearly the round tower on Scatterry Island.

The reader, probably, knows, that there is a steam navigation on the Shannon, both above and below Limerick. One of the Company's vessels plies between Limerick and Kilrush, and takes passengers from Tarbert, if any there be; and I, of course, took advantage of it the next day, to go up to Limerick. In order to embark, it is necessary to walk to Tarbert Island, a mile distant; but there is some talk of constructing a pier, either at Tarbert, or at Glyn, a village a mile or two farther up the river. The fares on the Shannon are very moderate; the distance from Tarbert to Limerick is thirty-five miles, and the fare is 4s. The vessels, too, are excellent, and in every way well appointed.

Soon after leaving Tarbert, the river contracts; for on the Clare side, a narrow headland pushes itself far into the river. The Clare side is here sloping and cultivated, without much wood, which is more abundant on the other side of the river; and on the Kerry side, the bank is also adorned by several villas. Two or three miles above Tarbert, we were opposite to Glyn village, and to the very handsome residence of the Knight of Glyn, with its fine woods around it. The village

looks neat and clean from the water ; and the church, on a neighbouring height, is a very pretty object. Here, the county of Kerry ends, and Limerick county begins.

On the Clare side the river now forms a wide bay, called Labeshida Bay ; and the banks, both on the Clare and Limerick side, exhibit the same features, until we reach Loghill. It is, I believe, on this part of the Shannon, that the real incident which gave rise to the excellent novel, called " The Collegians," took place ; and that the real Elie O'Connor was betrayed and drowned. On both sides, the banks of the Shannon are beautiful beyond Loghill. On the Limerick side, situated on a green eminence near to the river, is Mount Trenchard, the seat of Mr. Spring Rice ; and opposite, on the Clare side, the beautiful domain of Cahircon, with its deep bay, and mansion buried among woods.

Soon after passing Mount Trenchard we reached Foynes Island, the property of Lord Dunraven : and immediately afterwards, Achinish Island, which, however, is not an island, unless in extraordinary high tides. These are both on the Limerick side of the river, which now, on the other side, expands into the fine estuary which reaches far into the county of Clare, and is studded with grassy islands of the most beautiful greenness, covered with innumerable cattle. The view was here most captivating. The deep woods of Cahircon and Mount Trenchard were behind ; the green islands and more distant hills of Clare on one side, with the estuary of the river Fergus stretching far to the left : while on the Limerick side, a recess in the banks showed, at a little distance, the town and castle of Askeaton ; and at a greater distance, " the Hill of Truth," so celebrated throughout this part of the country as the resort of the fairies, or, " good people." The view of this hill gave rise to some conversation touching the good people : and the man at the helm entertained his auditors with many stories of fairies, in the existence of whom he evidently entertained the firmest belief.

The river, after we passed the estuary of the Fergus, suddenly contracts to about a mile and a half wide ; and Begh

Castle, an old black ruin, and near to it, the domain of Castle-town, and still farther, the fine ruin called Carrig-aguinal Castle, situated on a bold rock, present themselves successively. These are all on the Limerick side; but on the side of Clare, the objects of attraction are still finer,—particularly Bunratty Castle; which, together with a new mansion, lies in a deep recess, surrounded by wood, and with fine green behind.

All the remainder of the distance to Limerick, the views are full of beauty. High, sloping, and finely cultivated hills, a little back from the river; with handsome houses, and more than one old ruin nearer to the banks, are seen on the Clare side; while Cooper Hill, and Tervac, two fine domains, lie embosomed in wood on the other bank. The river has now gradually contracted; and the two last of its reaches, up to Limerick, are not more than from a quarter to three-quarters of a mile in breadth. Limerick is not seen, until the last reach of the river be entered; and owing to the absence of spires and architectural eminences, the city does not show to great advantage.

My object being to reach Ennis, the county town of Clare, about twenty-six miles from Limerick, I did little more than step out of the steam vessel, and into a car: and at present therefore, I shall say nothing of the city, until my return from Ennis.

The first part of the road to Ennis, embraces nearly the same views as the voyage up the Shannon; for the road runs parallel to, though at a little distance from, the river. From several of the eminences over which I passed, a great part of the course of the lower Shannon is laid open; and the country on either side of the road was green, fertile, and beautiful. Several of the ruins which are seen from the river—particularly Bunratty Castle,—I passed close by; and several fine domains, among others that belonging to Sir Edward O'Brien, lay in our way.

The little town of Clare, which from its situation ought to be the county town, in place of Ennis, lies between Limerick

and Ennis, and only about two miles from the latter. There is a fine navigation up the estuary of the river Fergus, to the bridge of Clare; so that Clare is the export point of the Ennis market. A very trifling expenditure would extend the water communication to Ennis; and there is no doubt, that, in that event, the prosperity of the town would rapidly increase; for Clare is not only a fine corn country, but an extensive cattle-breeding country. The proposal of a canal, however, has met with every opposition from narrow-mindedness and jobbing. The great Ennis proprietor likes nothing that costs anything; and the proprietor of Clare is not of course anxious to remove the point of export from Clare to Ennis. Notwithstanding the advantages possessed by Clare, the place looks poverty-stricken.

I reached Ennis just as it fell dark; and found the town in all the bustle that, in an Irish county town, precedes the holding of assizes: the inns were all choke full; and for lodgings, the most exorbitant prices were demanded. From three to eight guineas, for a few days, were asked for two rooms; and I was glad to find a place to creep into, even on these terms. Although the assize was opened on the following day, no business was entered upon until the day after; and I therefore employed the interval in those perambulations, scrutinies, and inquiries, which occupy a part of my attention in every town.

I had not yet seen, in Ireland, any town with suburbs so extensive, in comparison with the town itself; or, perhaps, it would be more correct to say, that I had not seen any town with so few good streets in comparison with the bad; for the rows and streets of cabins form, in fact, the greater part of the town, and cannot properly be called suburbs. There is not, indeed, one good street in Ennis; and there are only two streets which rise above the rank of lanes. Ennis, however, is a populous town, containing 12,000 inhabitants; and is susceptible of considerable improvement in many ways, but especially by the construction of some communication with the river navigation at Clare.

The retail trade in Ennis is not extensive, excepting in the

necessaries of life. Limerick is so near, and the communication with it so frequent and so easy, that it absorbs a great part of the retail trade of the county of Clare.

I have nowhere yet found land let dearer, or its small occupiers in a poorer condition, than in the neighbourhood of Ennis. I found average good land, but by no means first-rate land, situated about a mile from the town, let at 7*l.* and 8*l.* per acre; and very indifferent land, as far and even at a greater distance from the town, let at 4*l.* and 5*l.* per acre. This is literally squeezing the uttermost farthing out of the soil; and the proprietor of a large portion of the land in this neighbourhood, a Mr. Gore, is one of those short-sighted individuals, whose object is, to keep up a nominal rent-roll, and to let his land to the highest bidder. This gentleman takes no warning by the frequency of unpaid rents, and possessions relinquished; and finds no difficulty, in the present state of the country, when the demand for improved land is greater than the supply, of letting his land at whatever price he chooses to put upon it. The miserable suburbs of Ennis afford evidence of the same system. I need scarcely add, that there is great want of employment in and about Ennis, and that nothing is done in the way of providing it.

The country about Ennis offers many beautiful scenes. I would particularly name Eden vale and Eden lake,—spots of great loveliness and repose. But the neighbourhood of such charming scenes as these too often remind one of Castle Rack-rent—a large neglected-looking mansion, and a pack of hounds; and congregations of miserable cabins scattered around. Clare is a backward county; little has been done for it; and in no county has grand-jury jobbing been more unblushingly carried on.

CHAPTER XII.

Clare Assizes—English and Irish Assizes—Description of Cases tried—*Fair Murders*—Spirit of Faction—Difficulty of eliciting Truth—Disregard of an Oath—Extent to which Faction is carried—A paid Magistracy necessary—Rape Cases—Abduction—Murder—Assaults—Kissing the Book—Superstitions—General Impressions from attending an Irish Assize.

A SMALL Irish county town, during assizes, presents a spectacle that is never seen in England; for even supposing the calendar to be as long in an English as in an Irish county,—which it never is,—the difference in the character of the cases to be tried materially affects the aspects of the town and its population. In England, a case of murder or manslaughter brings to the county town only the near relations of the party to be tried,—and perhaps, of the party prosecuting; but in Ireland, things are on a different scale. The English murder is a private act, perpetrated by some ruffian for the sake of gain: the Irish homicide has been committed for no reason at all; and not by one cold-blooded ruffian, but by a crowd of demi-barbarians, who meet for the purpose of fighting; and who have no other reason for fighting, than because one half of the number are called O'Sullivan, and the other O' something else; so that when a manslaughter is to be prosecuted at an Irish assize, the case does

not bring up merely the accused and his one or two witnesses, but it brings half the "boys" in the county who bear the same name as the accused; and as many more, of the same name as the man who was killed,—every one of the former, ready to kiss the book, and swear, that the boy accused of the homicide, never handled a shillelah, or lifted a stone, or was seen in a "scrimmage" in his days; and every one of the latter as ready to swear; that the boy that was killed, was the most peaceable boy that ever bore his name, and that he was killed for no reason at all. Besides these homicide cases, which are peculiar to an Irish assize, prosecutions of any kind bring together a greater number of persons than in England,—for be it a robbery, or a rape, or any other crime, of which a man is accused, all his relations come forward to swear an alibi. It may be easily conceived, therefore, what a motley crowd fills the streets of an Irish county town at the time of an assize.

Nor is it only the number of persons, but their eagerness also, that strikes a stranger. Besides the groups that throng every part of the open streets, and who are always in earnest talk, dense crowds are collected at the door of every attorney's office, and no one of this brotherhood can walk a yard, without having his sleeve pulled by half-a-dozen "boys" or women, all interested for or against somebody; and entreating his honour to get them justice: which may mean, either to get a man hanged, or to save a man from hanging.

The most numerous class of cases at most Irish assizes, is that which is facetiously denominated *fair* murders; that is, homicides committed at fairs; and I do not know any means, by which so much insight is to be obtained into the character of the Irish peasantry, and into the condition of the country, and state of things among the lower classes of society, as by listening to these prosecutions for *fair* murders. There were many of these prosecutions at the Ennis assizes; and, although I had already heard much of the factions into which the peasantry are divided, I had no conception of the extent of this evil, nor of the bitterness with which this spirit of faction is

attended. However these factions may have originated, there is now no distinction among their adherents, excepting that which arises from the possession of a different name. The O'Sullivans are as distinct a people from the O'Neils, as the Dutch from the Belgians. The factions have chiefs, who possess authority. Regular agreements are made to have a battle; the time agreed upon is generally when a fair takes place; and at these fights, there is regular marshalling, and "wheeling;" and, as for its being a crime to break a "boy's" head, such an idea never enters the brain of any one.

The spirit of faction is brought into court by almost every witness in these prosecutions. I saw a witness, a woman, brought in support of the prosecution for a homicide committed on some cousin,—who on being desired to identify the prisoners, and the court-keeper's long rod being put into her hand, that she might point them out, struck each of them a smart blow on the head. As for finding out the truth, by the mere evidence of the witnesses, it is generally impossible. Almost all worth knowing is elicited on the cross-examination: and it is always, by the appearance and manner of the witness, more than by his words, that the truth is to be gathered. All the witnesses examined for the prosecution were, by their own account, mere lookers-on at the battle; nor stick, nor stone, had they. *Their* party had no mind to fight that day; but, in making this assertion, they always take care to let it be known, that, if they had had a mind to fight, they could have handled their shillelahs to some purpose. On the other hand, all the witnesses for the prisoner aver just the same of themselves; so that it is more by what witnesses won't tell, than by what they do tell, that truth is discovered. Half the witnesses called, on both sides, have broken heads; and it is not unfrequently by a comparison of the injuries received on both sides, and by the evidence of the doctor, that one is helped to the truth.

It will be easily seen, from what I have said, that I found ample confirmation of what I had often heard,—the small regard for veracity among the Irish peasantry, and their

general disregard of an oath. To save a relation from punishment, or to punish any one who has injured a relation, an Irish peasant will swear any thing. This would be called, by some, hatred of the law; but, although, in swearing falsely, the Irish peasant wishes to defeat the ends of justice, he does not do so, merely because he hates justice and the law, but because he thinks he is bound to save his relation, or any one of his faction. If the name of the man who was killed be O'Grady, then every witness, who comes up to be sworn for the prosecution, is also an O'Grady; or, if they be women, they were O'Grady's before they were married; and if the name of the prisoner be O'Neil, then all the witnesses, for the defence, are O'Neils; or, if there be any exceptions in name, still there is a relationship of some kind.

The factions, which occasion the atrocities of which we, in England, know very little, (for the cases reported from the Irish assizes, in the English papers, are generally cases in some degree political, and are seldom or ever the homicides arising out of fights at fairs,) have never been energetically met by the law and the magistracy. Some years ago, when trading magistrates were common, their non-interference was purchased by services performed. If a magistrate, living in the vicinity of a place where two great factions wished to try their strength, had a meadow ready for mowing—or a field of wheat ripe for the sickle—or wished to lay in his winter's turf—twenty or thirty men, of both factions, would volunteer their labour, and refuse, not only pecuniary recompense, but refreshment even: the fight was suffered to go on; and the breakers of heads were leniently dealt with. These days, I believe, are passed, or fast passing; but there is still far too little energy shown in putting down faction. It is true, that in many remote places—and it is often in the remotest spots that these encounters take place—there are no military, and few policemen; but a resident magistrate, if he be a man fit for his office, may always be previously informed upon these matters. He knows that a faction exists in his neighbourhood; he knows that the fair is drawing

near ; he knows that at every fair a fight takes place ; and where any agreement has been made to fight out the quarrel at the fair, he may, without any difficulty, obtain the most accurate information ; and every one knows how easily a mob, especially an Irish mob, is reduced to obedience by a very trifling display of firmness and force. I look upon it as most essential to the prosperity of Ireland, that these factions should be put down. They are nearly as inimical to the investment of capital, and nearly as much encouragers of absenteeism, as many of those other kinds of agitation which are more familiar to us : and I will again take the liberty of repeating my belief, that the substitution of a stipendiary, for an unpaid magistracy, is essential to the peace of Ireland. It is quite unreasonable to expect that an unpaid magistracy, situated as that magistracy is in Ireland, should do their duty. But to return to the Ennis assizes.

The most numerous class of cases (with one exception), and the most important class, as throwing the greatest light on the character and state of the people, were those homicides of which I have spoken. The exception in point of number of cases, is rape : of these cases, I think nearly forty were entered for trial : but only a very few of that number were heard ; and all of them terminated in acquittal. In nine cases out of ten, the crime is sworn to, merely for the purpose of getting a husband ; and the plan generally succeeds. The parties are married before the cause is called for trial ; and I have myself seen an earnest negotiation carried on under the piazzas of the court-house, a little while before a case was called. There was the " boy " indicted for a capital crime, but out on bail, as he generally is ; and the girl, about to swear away a man's life ; and the attorneys, and a large circle of relations, all trying to bring about a marriage, before Pat should be called upon to appear, and answer to the indictment that he, " not having the fear of God before his eyes, and being instigated by the devil," did so and so. In the case to which I was a listener, Pat and the fair one could not agree : the trial went on ; and Pat was acquitted.

The number and nature of these cases, certainly indicate no very high state of morals; for in every one of them, circumstances have occurred, which afford to the prosecutrix *some* ground of charge; and the amicable termination of these cases, shows how small the ground of the *capital* charge is. In these cases too, the want of veracity is strongly displayed; and it certainly impresses a stranger with no very favourable idea of female character, to find a girl falsely swearing a capital charge against a man whom she is willing at that moment to marry.

I saw tried one of those singular cases of abduction, which very frequently occur in Ireland; and which also throw considerable light on the state of society among the lower ranks. Sham cases of abduction are frequent. The "boy" and the girl are agreed; but the girl's relations being dissident, owing to her being an heiress, and entitled to a better match, it is made up between the young people, that the girl shall be carried away by apparent force. The youth makes known the case to his friends, and collects a number of associates: they come during the night to the house of the girl, force open the door, seize upon the maid, who, though "nothing loth," screams and makes all the opposition in her power, place her on horseback, and, after escorting her a sufficient distance, deliver her over to the "boy," on whose account the abduction was got up. The charge of abduction which I saw tried at Ennis, was a real abduction however, and a very shameless one, attended with circumstances of great cruelty; and originating, as indeed they always do, in love of money. These abductions are most detrimental to the peace of the country; because a feud is instantly generated between the relatives of the girl and those of the aggressor; and many subsequent fights invariably result from these outrages.

One of the cases tried at the Ennis assizes was in many respects similar to that celebrated case, which was the foundation of that excellent novel, "The Collegians." A man was tried for the murder of a girl whom he had seduced; he

killed her, and buried her in a peat-rick; and the similarity is the stronger, inasmuch as he was at the time in treaty to marry another, not so high born a damsel indeed as Anne Chute; but high enough and rich enough, to induce him to sacrifice *his* Elie O'Connor. In this case, one of the witnesses, on being desired to identify the prisoner, and being asked the question, "Is that the man?" turned round, and recognizing the prisoner, said, "That's him," and added, "How are you, Paddy?" nodding familiarly and good-humouredly to the accused. The man was convicted, and hanged.

Another case tried, arose out of one of those disputes, which so frequently originate in the possession of, and competition for, land. It was a case wherein a widow paid an enormous rent for a bit of potato land; and the rent not being paid, and the mischievous power of distraining being resorted to, the possessor endeavoured to save some portion of the potatoes. This gave rise to a fight; and the fight occasioned manslaughter. In this case, there was much false swearing, and much difficulty in arriving at the truth; and the case strongly impressed upon me the conviction, that the power of distraining, in the hands of the lower orders, is a most mischievous power.

I noticed, that great importance is attached to kissing the book; and sometimes, this ceremony is required, for greater security, to be performed two or three times. Without kissing the book, a witness looks upon his oath as very imperfectly taken; and it is necessary that, in the act of kissing, the witness be narrowly watched, lest he kiss his own thumb—with which he holds the book—in place of the book itself.

I noticed also, in the examination of one of the witnesses, a proof of the prevailing belief in the "good people," or fairies. A witness, being asked upon his oath, whether a certain individual could have made his way out of a room, the door and windows of which had been fastened, said, with

the utmost gravity, it was impossible he could have got out, unless by enchantment; meaning by this, without the assistance of the good people.

To attend an Irish assize, is certainly not the means by which a stranger is likely to obtain favourable impressions of Irish character. Few of its favourable traits are exhibited there; while all the darker shades are made but too manifest. Want of veracity, on the most solemn occasion on which veracity is ever called for, is but too plainly established. We find the very reverse of that straight-forwardness, which it is so delightful to see exhibited in the examination of a witness. If positive falsehood will serve the end, it is unhesitatingly resorted to; and as for telling the *whole* truth, I saw no one instance of it.

But the most striking defect of character which is brought to light, is a perfect contempt of human suffering, and an utter disregard even of the value of human life. Weapons, of the most deadly description, are brought into court as evidence,—sticks and whips loaded with lead; and stones, that might crush the head of a horse. A ruffian may occasionally be found in England, who would slay a man alive to become possessed of his purse; but I greatly question whether, out of Ireland, fifty men could be found in any one parish, in any country in Europe, ready to beat one another's brains out with sticks and stones, and all but glorying in the deed. And, as I have already observed, the same ferocity which has been exhibited at the fight, is brought into court: false oaths are the substitutes for weapons: and by these, witnesses seek to avenge the death of a relative, who has been more unfortunate, but probably not more criminal, than the accused.

I was much struck at Ennis, as I had been at Tralee, with the acuteness and talent of the Irish attorneys. Their cross-examinations of witnesses were admirable; certainly not surpassed by the very best cross-examinations I ever heard from the mouth of an English barrister.

A day or two before the conclusion of the Clare assizes, I left Ennis for Limerick; returning by a road different from that by which I had gone to Ennis, and through an equally interesting and fertile country.

CHAPTER XIII.

Return to Limerick—The New and Old Towns—Present state of the Trade of Limerick—Prosperity—Projected Improvements—Mr. Spring Rice—Public Institutions—The Lunatic Asylum—The Barrington Hospital—Antiquities—Condition of the Destitute Poor, and unemployed Artisans of Limerick—Minute Details—Poor laws—a *Mont de Piété*—Loan Fund—Environs of Limerick—Lands and Rents—Embankments on the Shannon—The Village of Adair—Currah, and Dunraven.

I know of no town in which so distant a line is drawn between its good and its bad quarters, as in Limerick. A person arriving in Limerick by one of the best approaches, and driving to an hotel in George Street, will probably say, "What a very handsome city this is!" while, on the other hand, a person entering the city by the old town, and taking up his quarters there—a thing, indeed, not likely to happen—would infallibly set down Limerick as the very vilest town he had ever entered.

The new town of Limerick is, unquestionably, superior to any thing out of Dublin. Its principal street, although less picturesque than the chief streets of Cork, would generally be reckoned a finer street. It is straight, regular, and modern-looking; and contains abundance of good private houses and of excellent shops: and although there is less the appearance of business in Limerick than in Cork, and fewer evidences of affluence in its neighbourhood; yet, in the more

modern aspect of every thing, there are more certain proofs of improvement than in the former city. The new town of Limerick is, indeed, of recent origin ; and the various indications of prosperity which Limerick presents, are all of them true indications.

The advance of the prosperity of Limerick has been rapid and uniform. The amount of exports has nearly doubled since the year 1822. Nor has this increase been in only one branch of trade. With very few exceptions, it has attended every branch. The corn export trade, especially, has advanced. In 1822, the export of wheat was 102,593 barrels ; in 1828, the export had increased to 150,583 barrels ; in 1832, the quantity exported was 194,144 barrels ; and in 1833, 218,915. In barley, the export has never been great ; and although it has doubled since the year 1824, it has somewhat decreased during the last two years. In oats, the increase has been very great. From 155,000 barrels, exported in 1822, the quantity had risen, in 1832, to 408,000. In flour and oatmeal, too, the increase of export has been steady and great. Of the former article, 172 cwt. only was exported in 1824. In 1828, the quantity had risen to upwards of 6000 cwt. ; in 1832, it was 33,000 cwt. ; and in 1833, upwards of 37,000. In oatmeal, the advance has been equally great. The butter trade, which I have found rather declining in most other places, exhibits no symptom of decline in Limerick. In 1822, 42,869 firkins were exported ; in 1831, 67,699 firkins were exported ; the following year, there was an advance upon this quantity ; and in 1833, 75,000 firkins were exported. In many other articles of trade, the increase has been equally great : but the general increase of trade is best observed by the estimated value of the whole exports. In 1822, the estimated value was 479,538*l.* ; in 1830, the estimated value was 720,266*l.* ; the following year, it was 854,406*l.* ; in 1832, it was 1,005,945*l.* ; and in 1833, 936,995*l.* The tonnage of vessels clearing out of the port, exhibits the same advance. In 1822, the tonnage was

29,876; in 1825, 41,871; in 1831, 52,326; in 1833, 56,850.

From these data, I think I may venture to pronounce Limerick to be at this moment an advancing city; and if certain improvements now in contemplation, be carried into effect, there is little reason to doubt that the progress of Limerick will be even more rapid than it has hitherto been. The improvement to which I particularly allude is, the construction of a dock, by which the great drawback on the trade of Limerick—want of floating depth of water at low tide—will be obviated. The plan proposed, is a bold one: it is, to throw a dam completely across the river, at some distance below the town; so that vessels of 500 or 600 tons will be enabled to come up the river, and find a dock with from 20 to 24 feet of water.

This is not the only improvement that is in progress in Limerick. A handsome new bridge across the Shannon is nearly completed; and a fine square is laid down, railed round, and planted, though not yet built upon. The centre of this square is adorned with a fluted pillar, surmounted by a statue of Mr. Spring Rice,—an honour well merited by that gentleman; for to his public spiritedness and exertions, the city of Limerick is mainly indebted for every improvement that has either been completed, or that is now in progress.

The public institutions of Limerick are on a fine scale, and some of them under excellent management. Among the most interesting of these, the Lunatic Asylum may be mentioned. It is, indeed, a pattern for all such institutions. I have never anywhere seen a better example of what may be accomplished by proper management. The building, in its exterior, might be the residence of a nobleman; its interior would put to shame the best scrubbed parlour of Rotterdam; and, in viewing its inmates, madness appears divested of half its horrors. When I visited this institution, it contained 204 persons, only four of whom were that day under coercion.

The county gaol is also reputed to be one of the most approved prisons in the kingdom. I did not visit it; but I believe it is conducted on the same system as the Cork county gaol, of which I have already spoken.

There are several institutions in Limerick, for the alleviation of man's bodily sufferings; and amongst these, I would particularly mention "Barrington's Hospital;" not only because it is one of the best conducted; but also, that I may have an opportunity of mentioning,—as it deserves to be mentioned,—the name of a family to whom the poor of Limerick are so deeply indebted. This hospital was built, and presented to the city, by the family of Sir Joseph Barrington; and as some evidence of the extensive benefit conferred on the city by this institution, I may mention, that no fewer than 14,000 persons were relieved at the dispensary attached to the hospital, during the last six months. Important additions to this hospital are at present contemplated by Mr. M. Barrington, who seems resolved not to stint his beneficence, but is willing rather that the capabilities of the institution shall keep pace with the wants of the city. Hospitals are frequently endowed with the wealth which the rich cannot carry into the grave with them; but to found an hospital during a man's lifetime, is an act that deserves to be recorded, and remembered.

I visited, in Limerick, an extensive school for females which is assisted by the new education board. I found about four hundred children, receiving a useful education,—able, in general, to write well; perfectly instructed in reading; and exhibiting, in their appearance and behaviour, the utmost order and neatness. This school is situated in the old town; which contains other objects to interest a stranger. Thomond-bridge is among the most curious of the ancient monuments of Limerick. The irregularity and rude antiquity of its structure, are equally curious to the antiquarian, and striking to the lover of the picturesque. The bridge is supposed to have been built about the year

1210, it is perfectly level, and is built upon fourteen arches.

Another interesting monument is the cathedral, a large shapeless pile, with a handsome interior; and with a tower, which every stranger ought to ascend; for there is no elevation adjacent to Limerick, from which any satisfactory view of the city can be obtained; and from this tower, not only the city, but a large portion of the counties of Limerick and Clare, is laid open; and the tortuous course of the noble Shannon is made intelligible. Unless there be a considerable eminence contiguous to a town, the readiest way of becoming acquainted with its situation, form, and extent, is to climb the steps of the highest church tower. I never omit to do this.

To the antiquarian, there are many interesting vestiges in the old town of Limerick. The Limerick reader will understand why I say towns; to the English reader it requires to be told, that there is an English and an Irish town. Remnants of walls, and isolated bastions, are here and there discovered; and the stone, on which the treaty of Limerick was signed, is pointed out to the stranger.

But there are objects of a far different nature, in the old towns of Limerick;—objects of a deeper, and more melancholy interest. The reader will recollect, that in Cork, Waterford, Kilkenny, and in other towns which I have visited, I have made it a part of my duty to inquire into the condition of the poor; and having been informed by those upon whom I thought some reliance was to be placed, that I should find more and deeper destitution in Limerick, than in any place which I had yet visited, my inquiries in Limerick were prosecuted with all the care which I was capable of bestowing; and I regret to say, that I found too dreadful confirmation of the very worst reports. I spent a day in visiting those parts of the city, where the greatest destitution and misery were said to exist. I entered upwards of forty of the abodes of poverty; and to the latest hour of my ex-

istence, I can never forget the scenes of utter and hopeless wretchedness that presented themselves that day. I shall endeavour to convey to the reader some general idea of what I saw.

Some of the abodes I visited were garrets, some were cellars; some were hovels on the groundfloor, situated in narrow yards, or alleys. I will not speak of the filth of the places; *that* could not be exceeded in places meant to be its receptacles. Let the worst be imagined, and it will not be beyond the truth. In at least three-fourths of the hovels which I entered, there was no furniture of any description, save an iron pot; no table, no chair, no bench, no bedstead;—two, three, or four little bundles of straw, with, perhaps, one or two scanty and ragged mats, were rolled up in the corners, unless where these beds were found occupied. The inmates were, some of them, old, crooked, and diseased; some younger, but emaciated, and surrounded by starving children; some were sitting on the damp ground, some standing, and many were unable to rise from their little straw heaps. In scarcely one hovel could I find even a potato. In one which I entered, I noticed a small opening, leading into an inner room. I lighted a bit of paper, at the embers of a turf which lay in the chimney, and looked in. It was a cellar wholly dark; and about twelve feet square: two bundles of straw lay in two corners; on one, sat a bed-ridden woman; on another, lay two naked children,—literally naked, with a torn rag of some kind thrown over them both. But I saw worse even than this. In a cellar which I entered, and which was almost quite dark, and slippery with damp, I found a man sitting on a little sawdust. He was naked: he had not even a shirt: a filthy and ragged mat was round him; this man was a living skeleton; the bones all but protruded through the skin: he was literally starving.

In place of forty hovels, I might have visited hundreds. In place of seeing, as I did, hundreds of men, women, and children, in the last state of destitution, I might have seen

thousands. I entered the alleys, and visited the hovels, and climbed the stairs at a venture ; I did not select ; and I have no reason to believe that the forty which I visited, were the abodes of greater wretchedness than the hundreds which I passed by.

I saw also another kind of destitution. The individuals I have yet spoken of, were aged, infirm, or diseased : but there was another class, fast approaching infirmity and disease ; but yet able and willing to earn their subsistence. I found many hand-loom weavers, who worked from five in the morning till eight at night, and received from a task-master, from half-a-crown to four shillings a week. Many of these men had wives and families ; and I need scarcely say, that confinement, labour, scanty subsistence, and despair, were fast reducing these men to the condition of the others, upon whom disease and utter destitution had already laid their hands. The subsistence of these men consisted of one scanty meal of dry potatoes daily.

I will only add one other instance of destitution. Driving in the neighbourhood of Limerick, on the Adair road, in company with a medical gentleman, the apparition of a man suddenly appeared by the side of our car. The gentleman who accompanied me knew him : he had been a stone-breaker ; but had become infirm, and at length utterly disabled, by disease, from labour : his cabin was close by ; and we ascertained, that he and his family had subsisted, during the last three days, on the leaves of that yellow-flowered weed which grows among the corn ; and which is boiled, and eaten with a little salt. I think I have already mentioned the use of this weed for a similar purpose, by the destitute poor of Kilkenny ; or if I have not, I ought to have done so.

I think it is impossible for me to select a better opportunity than this, to advert briefly to a topic, on which I have not hitherto offered any direct observations. I allude to the disputed question, whether there be, or be not, a necessity for some legal provision for the poor : and I confess, that with such scenes before me as I have at this moment, it does seem

to me an insult to humanity and common sense, to doubt the necessity to which I allude. I might carry the reader back with me, to gather arguments from Kilkenny, Waterford, Cashel; and, indeed, from almost every town, village, and hamlet, that has lain on my way; but the situation of the poor of Limerick is at this moment fresh in my memory; and I ask any man of ordinary intelligence, whether such a state of things can, or ought to be allowed to continue? Why should Lord Limerick, in Ireland, be exempt from the duty which Lord Limerick, in England, must perform? Why, under the same government, should men be allowed to starve in one division of the empire, and not in another? I mention the name of Lord Limerick, not because I suppose he, or any other man, can prevent pauperism on his city property; but because, when I inquire who are the individuals that contribute to keep the bodies and souls of these miserable creatures together, and when I ascertain, that many a humane citizen contributes more than the noble owner of all the property, then I perceive that there is something wrong; and that, leaving for a moment the question, as it relates to the poor, out of consideration, justice demands, that in the ratio of their abundance, men should be forced to contribute.

At present, I shall not pursue the subject farther. But in a future chapter, when I shall have seen every part of Ireland, I shall speak at greater length, and with more confidence. This I mean to do, with reference to a Poor Law Commission, which was prosecuting its inquiries while I was in Ireland. By the kindness of friends, I was furnished with all the papers which government intended should guide the inquiries of the commissioners; and when I shall have travelled over every part of Ireland, I shall probably feel myself competent to furnish some answer to the queries which are contained in the instructions alluded to; and possibly to present my own report.

A prospectus for establishing, in this city, a *Mont de Piété*, or charitable pawn-office, fell into my hands. The project originated with Mr. Barrington; and certainly, from the

statements made in the prospectus to which I allude, any substitute for the common pawnbroking system ought to meet with encouragement. The rate of interest, 30 per cent., sanctioned by government, is increased to a ruinous degree, by the necessity of redeeming and repawning weekly, in place of monthly. One shilling lent, and received in the week, pays 1*d.* interest, and 1*d.* for the duplicate: this is 8*s.* 8*d.* interest on one shilling, for a year; or 8*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* on a pound, for a year; or 886*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* per cent. per annum; and this, exclusive of compound interest. The prospectus, after setting forth the wrongs suffered by the necessitous, under the present system, proposes that the profits of the establishment, after paying expenses, shall be applied, in the first instance, in payment of the interest of the capital lent, at 5 per cent., and that the surplus profits shall be divided into equal shares: one, in paying off the debentures; and the other (and when the debentures are paid, the whole) in maintaining and extending the benefits of the hospital. I have dwelt the longer upon this matter, from the belief which I entertain, that the miserable condition of the poor of Ireland is made greatly more miserable, by the extortionate system of common pawnbroking; and that an important relief would be afforded to the poor, by the establishment, wherever practicable, of a *Mont de Piété*, to which the needy man may go with confidence—secure against usurious exaction—knowing that he will receive the fair value on the article deposited; that no advantage will be taken of his ignorance or necessity; and that he is, at the same time, obtaining relief for the present, and contributing to a fund which will comfort and relieve him in the hour of distress. I sincerely trust Mr. Barington may be successful in his attempt, and that the benefits to the poor of Limerick, which would infallibly follow, may lead to similar institutions elsewhere.

There is in Limerick, as in Cork and several other places, a loan fund, the residue of subscriptions for the distressed Irish, which was apportioned by the London Committee, in 1822, to different counties, for the promotion of industry. I

have a statement, now before me, of the present condition of this fund; and it will surprise the reader to be told, that, while the sum put at the disposal of the county of Limerick has increased by judicious management, since the year 1822, from 6370*l.* to 7521*l.*, and, in other counties, in greater or less proportion,—in some counties it has remained stationary, or suffered a decrease. In Clare, the 6000*l.* intended to be applied to the benefit of the industrious, by loan, at a small interest, and on proper security, has become 5989*l.* In Sligo, the 3870*l.* has become 3831*l.* In Leitrim, there has been on the original 2000*l.*, a decrease of no less than 867*l.*; and perhaps the most singular fact of all is, that the 2500*l.* allocated to Tipperary is, at this moment, precisely 2500*l.* There must have been somewhere gross mismanagement, or grosser jobbing. Where has the 2500*l.* been since 1822? It can never have been applied as intended, because a single loan made, must have either added to, or taken from it: it cannot have lain in a bank, because interest would have accrued upon it! From all that I could ascertain, both in Cork and in Limerick, I have reason to think that this loan fund has been most beneficial in its effects; and that any loan fund, under judicious management, must produce important results, in encouraging industry, and accumulating capital.

I have said nothing, as yet, of the environs of Limerick. In the neighbourhood of such a river as the Shannon, they can scarcely be otherwise than beautiful; and the great natural fertility of the soil, and the improved husbandry, pretty generally adopted, greatly increase the attractions of this fine district. The Marquis of Lansdowne possesses an extensive estate close to Limerick. It is in the finest state of cultivation; and, from a personal survey, I may state that every industrious tenant is in comfortable circumstances; and that the moderate rent charged for the excellent land in this neighbourhood, was in striking contrast with the rents paid for the comparatively indifferent land which I had lately seen in the neighbourhood of Ennis.

I cannot speak so well of the property of the Earl of Lime-

rick. Whatever advantages the tenantry possess, are referrible to the exertions and good-heartedness of his lordship's agents. I will not trust myself to speak further of the Earl of Limerick, unless only to add, that from high and low, rich and poor, I never heard a good word of his lordship.

Some extensive embankments are now in course of being constructed below Limerick, with the view of reclaiming land. One of these, the lowest down the river, is undertaken by a Scotch gentleman, who has already sunk a large sum in the attempt: the others are undertaken by Lord Lansdowne and by Mr. Barrington; and there is no doubt of the ultimate success of all these attempts.

Before leaving Limerick, I visited the beautiful village of Adair, and the fine domains of the Earl of Dunraven, and of Sir Aubrey de Vere.

This was one of the most agreeable days I have spent. I took a circuitous road, skirting the left bank of the Shannon, and visiting a village, called Palace, on my way, that I might have the pleasure of looking in upon the talented author of "The Collegians." Curragh, the domain of Sir Aubrey de Vere, I greatly admire. Sir Aubrey being then engaged as foreman of the grand jury at Limerick, I had not an opportunity of presenting my letter of introduction. It is only when I do not, or have not an opportunity of presenting my letters of introduction, that I mention them at all; and this, not as information to the public, to whom the matter is of no importance; but for the information of the individuals who gave me the letters, and of the individuals to whom they were addressed, who may possibly be aware of my having been in possession of such letters; and who, without some mention of them, would be ignorant of the reason why they were not used.

Adair, and the domain of the Earl of Dunraven (to whom I also carried a letter, which I did not deliver), are both beautiful. Within Lord Dunraven's domain are no fewer than three ruins of abbeys,—one of them, the Black Abbey, yet in tolerable preservation. There is also, close to the picturesque

bridge over the Maize, the ruins of the castle of the Earls of Desmond. The Earl of Dunraven is now building a new castellated mansion, close to the old house: with Kingston Castle in my recollection, it appeared rather diminutive; but the surrounding scenery is close scenery, and not suitable to a very commanding edifice.

CHAPTER XIV.

Ascent of the Shannon, from Limerick to Athlone—Castle Connell—The Rapids—Holy Well—The River above Castle Connell—Killaloe—The Steam Navigation Company—Voyage up Loch Derg to Portumna—Character of this expansion of the Shannon—Details of the Ascent—Portumna—The River and its Banks between Portumna and Banagher—Comparison with other Rivers—Desolate Scenes—Banagher—Journey to Athlone.

I now return to the Shannon; from which, the city of Limerick, and its attractions, and interests, have some time diverted me.

It is impossible to ascend by water from Limerick to the village of Castle Connell, owing to the rapids which intervene: but the road, although not running close to the river, commands its banks; and carries the traveller through as lovely a country as the imagination can well picture. In variety, and wooded fertility, it is not surpassed by the most celebrated of the English vales, no one of which can boast as an adjunct to its scenery, so noble a river as the Shannon. Many fine seats lie on the left of the road, towards the river, particularly Mount Shannon, the residence, at least the property, of the Earl of Clare; and glimpses are also caught of several other fine domains and villas, amongst others, those belonging to the numerous family of Massey.

On reaching the village of Castle Connell, my first feeling was admiration; my next, surprise, that I should never before have heard of Castle Connell. It is surrounded by every

kind of beauty; and after spending a day in its neighbourhood, I began to entertain serious doubts whether even Killybegs itself greatly surpassed in beauty the scenery around Castle Connell. It is a little village of neat, clean, country houses, situated close to the Shannon, and backed and flanked by noble domains, and fine spreading woods. Just below the village, commence the rapids of the Shannon, of which I had never even heard, until I reached Limerick; and these are of themselves well worth a visit. I hired a little boat to shoot the upper rapid, and take me across; for the scenery is best seen from the Clare side: and I was well repaid for my trouble. A charming walk leads down the opposite bank, through Sir Hugh Massey's grounds; and I do not at this moment recollect any example of more attractive river scenery. The wide, deep, clear river is, for more than a quarter of a mile, almost a cataract: and this, to an English eye, must be particularly striking. It is only in the streams and rivulets of England, that rapids are found: the larger rivers generally glide smoothly on without impediments from rocks: the Thames, Trent, Mersey, and Severn, when they lose the character of streams, and become rivers, hold a noiseless course; but the Shannon, larger than all the four, here, pours that immense body of water, which above the rapids is forty feet deep, and three hundred yards wide, through and above a congregation of huge stones and rocks, which extend nearly half a mile; and offers not only an unusual scene, but a spectacle approaching much nearer to the sublime, than any moderate-sized stream can offer even in its highest cascade. None of the Welsh water-falls, nor the Geisbach in Switzerland, can compare for a moment in grandeur and effect with the rapids of the Shannon.

Nor is the river the only attractive object at Castle Connell: its adjuncts are all beautiful. The greenest of lawns rise from it; the finest timber fringes it; magnificent mansions tower above their surrounding woods; swelling knolls are dotted with cattle and sheep: and it so happened, too,

that the landscape had all the advantage which the alternations of sunshine and shadow could give it.

I went as far as a holy well, dedicated to St. Senanus. Judging from what I saw, it must be in high repute; for hundreds of little wooden vessels lay heaped in and above it, the offerings of those who had come to drink; and the trees that overshadowed the well were entirely covered with shreds of all colours—bits and clippings of gowns, and handkerchiefs, and petticoats,—remembrances also of those who drank. These, I believe, are the title-deeds to certain exemptions, or benefits, claimed by those who thus deposit them in the keeping of the patron saint, who is supposed to be thus reminded of the individuals whose penances might otherwise have been overlooked. I noticed among the offerings some strings of beads, and a few locks of hair.

The inn at Castle Connell is beautifully situated, and very moderate in its charges; and the inhabitants of Limerick make abundant use of it: for, besides that Castle Connell is resorted to as summer quarters, it is also a noted rendezvous of the tradespeople, on Sundays and holidays. Houses are scarce and dear. For a very small house, 10*l.* a month is asked; and a couple of rooms indifferently furnished, could not be had for less than 25*s.* per week. I found this to be universally the case throughout Ireland at all places of occasional resort; everywhere affording proof of want of enterprise in the employment of capital, however judicious the investment might be.

I hired a small rowing boat to take me up the river to Killaloe, where the steam navigation of the upper Shannon commences. The rapids of Castle Connell, although they interrupt the river navigation, are not allowed to impede the water communication between the upper Shannon and Limerick,—a canal being cut from the city, to a point in the Shannon, about a mile and a half above Castle Connell.

Leaving Castle Connell, Clare is on one side, and Limerick county on the other side of the river; but the division line

between Limerick and Tipperary is soon passed; and then Clare is on the west, and Tipperary on the east side of the river. Nothing could be greener than the sloping banks which we rowed swiftly by; they were adorned too, on the Limerick side especially, by several pretty villas; and this being hay season, the slanting sunshine, falling athwart the after-grass, bathed it in hues that were almost too brilliant to be natural. The river is here from two to three hundred yards wide, and averages from thirty to forty feet in depth.

About two miles up the river from Castle Connell we reached O'Brien's bridge; an old bridge, with a castle, and small village on the Clare side of the river. The bridge has thirteen arches, and is only interesting from its antiquity. There is a slight fall of water; but not so much as to occasion any difficulty or danger, either in ascending, or in shooting the arch. Beyond O'Brien's bridge, the country improves; fine cultivated hills appear at some little distance from the river; and although a deficiency of wood may be remarked, the views on either side present many sweet pictures of quiet pastoral scenery—verdant slopes, and drowsy cattle, and nodding water-lilies, and here and there a farm-house, and its more animated accompaniments. We also passed several small islands, none of them large enough to be made subservient to utility.

About a mile and a half before reaching Killaloe, another canal cut is requisite, owing to some inconsiderable rapids. The canal skirts the domain of the Lord Bishop of Killaloe, whose palace and grounds are sufficiently inviting: the fine long meadow-grass of the bishop's lawn, reminded me, by contrast, of a saying I had heard of the county of Kerry, where grass is so scarce, that it is said, the cows won't lift up their heads to look at a passer-by, for fear that they should not be able to find the grass again. I reached Killaloe about four hours after leaving Castle Connell.

Killaloe, I found an improving town. This improvement arises from several causes; but chiefly is owing to the spirited proceedings of the Inland Steam Navigation Company,—a

company, whose objects are most closely connected with the improvement of Ireland, and which are too important and too vast, to be left, in the present infancy of the establishment, to private exertion, or even to public patronage. The improvement of the navigation of the Shannon and its tributaries, is deserving of the especial protection and aid of government. Killaloe is the head-quarters of the company; and from this point, there is a regular steam communication for goods and passengers up the Shannon, through Loch Derg, to Portumna, Banagher, and Athlone; and from the same point, by packet-boat to Limerick, and thence, again, by steam to the sea. It is intended to carry the steam navigation above Athlone, through Loch Ree, to Lanesborough, Carrick, and Leitrim; and when these arrangements are completed, there will be a direct navigation on the Shannon, of nearly *two hundred and fifty miles*, mostly performed by steam; together with a direct water communication to Dublin, by the grand canal.

I have ascribed the improving condition of Killaloe, chiefly to the enterprise of the Steam Navigation Company. This arises in several ways,—partly in the direct employment afforded by the company in the construction of buildings, docks, &c.; and partly in the general encouragement offered to trade, by the facilities afforded, both for internal communication, and for export trade, which has lately been greatly on the increase. There are also other sources of employment and wealth in Killaloe. The extensive slate quarries in the neighbourhood, afford a yearly export of at least 100,000 tons; and dispense about 300*l.* weekly, in wages: and close to the town, an extensive mill has lately been erected, for the sawing of marble and stone, which are sent there both from Galway and Limerick counties: so that altogether there is little want of employment in Killaloe.

The town is very agreeably situated on the rising ground above the river, and within a mile of the noble expansion of water, called Loch Derg. An old bridge of nineteen arches, just below the town, connects the counties of Clare and Tip-

perary; and there is an old cathedral, with a square tower, and Saxon archway of considerable beauty. I attempted to gain the summit of the tower, by the stair inside; but found it in so ruinous and dangerous a condition, that I was forced to give up the attempt.

I stepped on board the steam vessel at eight in the morning, satisfied with every thing about Killaloe, excepting the inn, which is far from being what might be expected at the place where the Navigation Company has fixed its head-quarters. About a mile and a half from Killaloe, just at the entrance to Loch Derg, is a mount on the left bank, covered with trees, called O'Brien's fort, where it is said the ancient kings one resided. On entering Loch Derg, several pretty and interesting objects attract one on both sides. The vessel kept nearly mid-water, and this first reach of the loch being only about a mile wide, there is nothing lost to the eye. Derry Castle, the residence of Captain Head, on the Tipperary side, is a beautiful spot: the lawn slopes down to the water; the house is almost hidden in fine woods; and there is a fine back-ground of cultivated mountains. On a little island, close to the shore, are seen the ruins of a castle.

All the way through this first reach of the loch, a distance of about four miles, the character of the bank continues the same: not that there is any thing like monotony; all the variety that can be produced by verdure, wood, and tillage, is there: but the banks are invariably sloping and cultivated, with higher and more sterile elevations rising behind; ten or twelve islands, of inconsiderable size, lie scattered over this first reach. At the point where this first reach of the loch terminates, opening into the wider part of the lake, the banks on both sides are extremely beautiful. The Clare side is covered with deep woods, backed by lofty hills; and the Tipperary side is adorned by the fine domain of Castle-loch, embosomed in magnificent oak woods: here, too, an island surmounted by a ruin, is seen on the right, close to the shore; and a small harbour has been constructed in a little bay, for the convenience of the export of slate. This first reach of the

loch varies in depth from thirty up to ninety feet ; but in the mid channel, the average depth is from seventy to eighty feet. Close to the shore, there is generally from ten to fifteen feet water ; and at some parts, as much as forty feet.

Immediately on emerging from the first reach, the loch spreads both to the left and right. The left reach, which is not the path of the vessel, is an interesting one. Clare is on one side of it, and county Galway on the other. On the Clare side, the nearer banks are finely cultivated and well wooded ; and more than one ruined castle is seen rising from the water's edge. One of these castles was some time ago held in forcible possession by illicit distillers, against all the civil force that attempted, from time to time, to dislodge them : and it was at length found necessary to batter down the sheltering walls with cannon ball. On the Galway side, the scenery is diversified by several fine country seats, and by the prettily situated village called Mount Shannon. Several islands, also, adorn this reach ; particularly Holy Island, covered with beautiful green pasturage, on which there is an extensive grazing ; and where also is one of the ancient round towers, besides some lesser and more imperfect ruins. The other islands are no way remarkable. With the exception of Bushy island, which is what it professes to be, they are destitute of wood.

Leaving this reach of which I have just been speaking, to the left, we now turned into the main reach of the loch. The banks are now, for a few miles, less interesting on the Tipperary side ; but on the Galway shore, several gentlemen's seats are seen, and a tolerable sprinkling of wood. We made a short halt at a place, formerly called Cow island, now christened Williamstown. Here an hotel is in course of being built ; and it is in contemplation to make this a point of export from the county of Clare, and to construct a road to Ennis, its chief town. Opposite to this, on the Tipperary side, many interesting objects are described : several old castles frown on the shores of two deep bays, Youghal and Dromineer bay, which diverge far to the right ; and here and

there, more modern houses, with sweeping lawns, and crowning woods, give animation to the scene.

The slow rate at which the steamer carried us through the lake, afforded ample time for observation ; and although the weather was not what would generally be called fine, and gave rise to much grumbling among the passengers, I was not among the number of grumblers. It was not, indeed, one of those splendid summer days, when lakes are like mirrors, and woods are mirrored in them ; when the green slopes seem to bask in sunshine, and repose dwells among the hills. It was all sorts of weather : we had gleams of sunshine ; sudden mists ; flying showers ; moments of calm ; sweeping breezes : so that in the course of one voyage up Loch Derg, I had the advantage of seeing it under as many aspects, as if I had traversed it in every season.

After passing Cow island, the loch bends a little to the left ; and just at the bend, we passed close to a large island called Flanmore,—a green sloping island, on which I noticed some ruins. On the Galway side, the country here is wild and uninteresting ; but on the Tipperary shore, villas are scattered here and there ; and as we proceeded farther, they became more numerous. The lake here, for several miles, is not more than a mile in width ; and the Tipperary banks are as full of beauty, as wood, lawn, cultivation, and villas, can make them. The domain of Castle Biggs is particularly attractive. A fine swelling headland projects into the lake ; a grey stern ruin stands close to the water ; while the modern house, in the midst of a beautiful park, looks down upon a pretty cove studded with green islands. Opposite to this, on the Galway side, the banks are thickly covered with wood, which is not however of large growth ; and a wild uninteresting tract of country reaches along Cloonga-gave bay,—the last into which the loch expands on the left.

We were now within sight of Portumna town and Portumna lodge,—or rather the remains of what was once the fine seat of the Marquis of Clanricarde. Its situation is not par-

ticularly happy : the country is flat, and the wood generally of small growth ; and it is not believed that the Marquis will ever again rebuild his mansion.

The great reach of Loch Derg, through which I have just conducted the reader, contains upwards of forty islands, varying in size from a mere point, to the circumference of perhaps two English miles. The loch, not reckoning in its width the great reach, which has Clare on one side, and Galway on the other, is from one to three miles broad. The depth is very variable. There is however, everywhere, a sufficiency of water for all the purposes of navigation. The length of this expansion of the Shannon, from Portumna to Killaloe, is twenty-three miles.

The town of Portumna lies about a quarter of a mile from the river, and I had only time for a flying visit ; for I wished to take advantage of the fine evening, and go forward to Banagher, in the small river steamer, to which the passengers from Killaloe are transferred. Portumna is a place of considerable export trade to Dublin, and enjoys a good retail trade besides ; but the improvement of the town is much checked by the disinclination of the Marquis of Clanricarde to grant good leases.

The distance up the river, from Portumna to Banagher, is fourteen miles and a half ; and, by the bye, I must not omit to note the expense of travelling by steam on the Shannon. The distance from Killaloe to Banagher, is thirty-eight miles ; and for this, the charge is 6s. 4d., or 2d. per mile. The charge is certainly not high ; and I understood that the only ground of complaint—the slow rate of travelling—was on the eve of being removed, by the employment of a new steam vessel of greater power. The company has already done wonders ; and it would be absurd, as yet, to expect perfection.

To the lover of the picturesque, the banks of the Shannon, between Portumna and Banagher, present little that is attractive. But to other minds there may be an interest of perhaps a higher kind. We are navigating in a steam

vessel, a river, here a hundred and thirty miles from the sea; and we know it to be navigable nearly a hundred miles higher. Its volume appears to be as great as when we saw it at Limerick: it is several hundred yards broad; and twenty and thirty feet deep. What a body of water is this! What are the Thames, the Medway, the Mersey, the Severn, the Trent, the Humber, the Tweed, or the Clyde, a hundred and thirty miles from the sea? I am not sure if they exist at all; or if any of them do, they are but brawling streams for the minnow to sport in. There is, in fact, an approach to the sublime, in the spectacle of such a river as this; and the feeling receives aid from the character of its banks. These are wide, and apparently interminable plains, uninclosed,—almost level with the river,—bearing luxuriant crops of herbage, and feeding innumerable herds. We see scarcely any habitations: no villages or hamlets; and no road or traffic on the banks. The meadows of which I speak, extend on both sides of the river, the greater part of its course from Banagher to Portumna. These meadows are all overflowed during the winter, and are let for grazing at a very high rent. For many miles, there is nothing to relieve the monotony of these vast flats, excepting an old castle, called Torr Castle,—no otherwise remarkable than as being the only object which breaks the level. The views on this part of the Shannon, brought forcibly to my recollection the banks of the Guadalquivir, between Seville and Cadiz.

Six or seven miles above Portumna, the river branches out, leaving several flat green islands; on one of which a Martello tower, once a defence against the people of Connaught, is still foolishly kept up. The ruins of Meeleck monastery, too, on the Galway side, attract the attention. They appeared to be both fine and extensive. It is here that the lower Brusna river falls into the Shannon. It is the boundary line betwixt the provinces of Leinster and Munster, and is one of those aids, which may be brought to bear advantageously on the Shannon navigation. From the point of junction, it is only

eight miles to the town of Birr, and at a very moderate expense the Brusna may be rendered navigable.

From this point to Banagher, the river flows in various branches, leaving not fewer than twenty islands, great and small. The country on both sides, too, begins to improve; and to assume greater variety. Wood, though but of scanty growth, begins to appear, and the ground rises into some considerable elevations. I reached Banagher a little before dusk, and found excellent accommodation in the only hotel. This town, like all the others on the line of the inland navigation, is progressively advancing. There is a good corn market, a considerable export, and a thriving retail trade. The town itself has little in its appearance to recommend it. It consists chiefly of one very long street; and has some batteries on the Connaught side; and a bridge of nineteen arches.

To have had the advantage of a steam vessel from Banagher up the river to Athlone, I should have been obliged to have remained at Banagher several days; for at present this convenience occurs only twice a week. I sufficiently ascertained, however, that by travelling to Athlone by land, I should lose little in the attractions of scenery. The river, from Athlone to Banagher, flows through a wide tract of bog land,—even more uninteresting than the meadows which extend between Portumna and Banagher. The only relief from this monotony, is the Seven Churches,—ruins which stand close by the river, about ten miles above Banagher.

I hired a car to Athlone, and left Banagher the day after I arrived in it. Here I found a change in the expense of travelling. Posting by car, had hitherto been everywhere 8*d.* per mile; but I now found that the price varied with the number of persons using the car. If one person only travels, the price is 6*d.* per mile; if two travel, it is 8*d.*; if three travel, it is 10*d.*

For some miles after leaving Banagher, the road keeps near to the river, and then passes through the station

called Shannon Harbour, where the Grand Canal to Dublin connects itself with the Shannon. From this point, there is a regular communication daily; both to Dublin, and, by steam, on the Shannon to Limerick. A little beyond Shannon harbour, we crossed the upper Brusna river, at a point where the wood scenery is extremely beautiful, and where also the fine domain of Colonel L'Estrange skirts the road.

Soon after, we entered that wide tract of bog land, which I have described the Shannon as traversing. It extended on both sides of the road, as far as the eye could reach; and presented, under the influence, too, of a dull atmosphere, as dreary a prospect as can well be conceived. The Bog of Allen, which traverses a great part of King's County, lay on our right; and the bogs of Galway stretched away to the left. Occasionally, as the road ascended some trifling elevation, the Shannon was discovered, winding its brimful course, through the low, wide, brown, bog lands, which extended far on either side of it. To the utilitarian, even this prospect is not deficient in interest. Turf—that article of prime necessity in Ireland—is not equally abundant in all parts; and here, in the extensive bogs through which a great river flows, there is security for an abundant and cheap supply of fuel to parts the most remote.

The road between Banagher and Athlone, I found one of the worst I had seen in Ireland. Few gentlemen's seats are in its neighbourhood; and therefore, it is nobody's interest to make a job. Some considerable distance before reaching Athlone the country improves, and the immediate neighbourhood of the town is finely diversified and well cultivated.

CHAPTER XV.

Athlone—The Bridge and the Shannon—Barracks and Fortifications—Ballymahon—Land, Landlords, and Rents in the County of Longford—Condition of the Farmers—The Protestant Population—Religious Dissension—Want of Sympathy with the People, on the part of the Aristocracy—Labouring Classes—Con-acre—Irish opposition to the Law—The Protestant Clergy—The Catholic Priesthood—Trading Magistrates—Necessity for a Stipendiary Magistracy.

ATHLONE is a remarkably ugly town. So deficient is it in good streets, that after I had walked over the whole town, I still imagined I had seen only the suburbs. But it is, notwithstanding, both an interesting town, and an excellent business town. It stands in the midst of a well cultivated and thickly peopled country; and, both in its export and general trade, is rapidly improving. At least eighty tons, chiefly corn, are sent down the Shannon, on a weekly average, by the Navigation Company. The bridge is extremely ancient, and is in a disgracefully ruinous condition. In many places the parapet wall has given way; and the carriage road is so narrow that, on a market-day, it frequently happens that one can pass in no other way than by jumping from cart to car and from car to cart. The bridge is altogether a disgrace to the town and the kingdom. Notwithstanding that between Athlone and Portumna, the Shannon receives the two Brusna rivers, the Suck, and many smaller tributaries, it appears at Athlone to carry an undiminished

volume of water. Above Athlone bridge—upwards of a hundred and fifty miles from the sea—the river is three hundred yards wide, and ranges from twenty to thirty-five feet in depth.

Athlone is a great military station. Extensive barracks both for foot regiments and for artillery lie in its immediate neighbourhood; and, on the Connaught side, a line of fortifications has been erected. In the very centre of the town, too, there is an ancient castle, with a strong central tower, and massive bastions. All these places are fully garrisoned.

Athlone I made my head-quarters for a week; and from it made excursions through different parts of the county of Longford. Independently of my chief objects of inquiry, another object of interest presented itself, in the reputed birth-place of Goldsmith, and in the scene of "The Deserted Village," to both of which I shall by and by return.

Ballymahon was one of my central points. This is a town about ten miles from Athlone, and capable of much improvement. A very fertile country surrounds it: it is sufficiently near to water communication; and some idea may be formed of the extent of its market, when I mention that from 300*l.* to 400*l.* worth of eggs have been sold on one market-day. The town and its capabilities are, however, utterly neglected by the proprietor, who grants no leases, and acts—as a great majority of landlords do—as if he had no interest in the permanent improvement of his property.

Land, throughout the county of Longford, is, with few exceptions, let high; but there *are* exceptions. Lady Ross forms one of these. The land on her ladyship's estate is well worth the value put upon it, and, with a little more skill and industry, would afford even higher rents than are exacted. But there is a lamentable want of good husbandry; clean farming appears to be unknown: every where fields are seen covered with luxuriant crops of weeds, to be ploughed in as manure; and nowhere is there visible any of the neatness and care which are indicative of industrious habits. I visited a farmer who possessed 107 acres at 23*s.* the Irish acre (not

above 16s. the English acre), almost every acre of the farm arable; and yet this man had as few comforts about him as are found among the holders of a few acres. It must not be forgotten, however, that one would frequently judge erroneously of the condition of a farmer, by observing only his way of life. More minute observation and closer inquiries must be made. Comfort, as we understand it, is neither understood nor relished in Ireland. I know examples, both in this and in other counties, of persons, living in the most miserable way, leaving considerable sums behind them; and giving handsome portions to their daughters. I do not adduce these examples with the view of insinuating that the land-occupiers are in a better condition than they appear to be. If examples occasionally occur, of farmers leaving behind them old stockings full of sovereigns, or of portioning off their daughters handsomely, this is accomplished at the expense of all that we should call the necessaries of life; and I cannot think it any brilliant example of prosperity, that a farmer should leave a bag of gold behind him, if he and his family have subsisted all their lives on dry potatoes. To entitle one to say that a farmer can live out of his land, he must be able to pay his rent; to live comfortably; to educate and provide for his family; and to do something towards improving his land. I fear, however, if such were the standard by which the condition of the Irish land-occupiers was to be judged, we should be brought to the conclusion, that none of the land-holders in Ireland, excepting perpetual leaseholders, can live out of their land.

There is a considerable Protestant population in the county of Longford; but I was sorry to learn that much bad feeling existed, owing to a difference in religious belief. A trifling example of this occurred while I was in the neighbourhood. Lady Ross had established several Protestant schools: and the Catholic children of the adjoining village were accustomed to post themselves on a bridge, across which the Protestant children were obliged to pass, and to spit upon them as they passed by. Several of these offenders were brought

before an active and impartial neighbouring magistrate, who, very properly, sent them to the house of correction.

The resident landlords of the county of Longford are, with few exceptions, an unimproving race; and I regretted to find, that betwixt them and the lower orders there was not the best understanding. A wealthy and unembarrassed baronet, on being asked why he did not embellish his domain, which stood greatly in need of it, and thus give some employment to the people, said, "he made it a rule to circumscribe, within the least possible limits, his intercourse with the lower orders." It is not every landlord who might choose so to express himself; but I fear there are too many who so act. I have generally found the land-owners extremely ignorant of the real condition of the poor: and how, indeed, are they to gain their knowledge, unless they specially seek it? They do not themselves hire labourers; they do not call on the small farmer for rent; they do not themselves eject or drive for rent;—and it is not to the hall, but to the farm-house, that the mendicant, and the mendicant's wife, and the orphan child, and the unemployed labourer, carry their sack, and their petition. The landlord has his gate-house, beyond which the vigilant porter permits no unwelcome visitor to pass.

The wages of labour throughout the county of Longford are low: 8*d.* in summer, and 6*d.* in winter, is the usual rate; and that without diet. Many have endeavoured to convince me that this rate is sufficiently high for the quantity of labour performed; and that it would be greater economy to pay 1*s.* 6*d.* to an English labourer, than 8*d.* to an Irishman; and that I might, every hour of the day, have confirmation of this, by observing the listless way a labourer goes about his work. But when I see a labourer leaning on his spade, I do not see, in this, so much a proof of unwillingness to work, as of want of full employment; and I am not aware that there is any complaint of idleness against the migrating Irish, by those who employ them: and besides, let those who make unfavourable comparisons between English and Irish labourers,

ask themselves the question—how an English labourer would work, if a scanty meal of dry potatoes were substituted for bacon and beer ?

The con-acre system is universal in this county ; and the rent paid does not generally exceed the rate of 8*l.* per acre. The same practice, too, prevails here, as I had found in the county of Kilkenny, and in some other parts, by which the individual furnishing manure receives, rent free, the produce of as much land as he is able to manure. At 7*l.* an acre for manured potato land, the tenant appears to have a good bargain. Add to the 7*l.*,—3*l.* 10*s.* for seed and labour ; and suppose the produce of the acre fifteen tons of potatoes, at 2*d.* per stone ; the value would in that case be 20*l.*, leaving to the occupier 9*l.* 10*s.*, if he sent the potatoes to market. These, too, are both low calculations : fifteen tons is not the most abundant produce ; and 2*d.* per stone is a low price. The rent of con-acre here is lower, however, than I have generally found it elsewhere. The reader will recollect that 10*l.* and 12*l.* are the more usual rents.

I regretted to have confirmation in the county of Longford, of that desire generally ascribed to the Irish peasantry, of opposing the course of justice. It has generally been said, that in this, Ireland offers a great contrast to the neighbouring island : that, whereas in England, every man's hand is raised in support of the law ; in Ireland, all are arrayed in opposition to it. That there is a considerable degree of truth in this, cannot be denied ; though, at the same time, many acts, which, at first sight, might be set down as arising out of pure dislike of the course of justice, appear, upon minuter inquiry, to have originated in clanship, and in a conviction, common throughout Ireland, of the claim which all relations have to protection, however grievously they may have offended against the law. Examples of this, I think I have already given, when speaking of the assizes at Ennis. Some facts, however, which came to my knowledge in Longford, were strongly indicative of a determination to set law at defiance,

and of a disposition to regard all men as martyrs, or at least as injured persons, who had been brought, by crimes however heinous, within the operation of the law.

I will adduce two instances. A stranger to that part of Ireland, and a Protestant, was servant in the house of a magistrate; and he robbed his master to a considerable extent. This man, though a perfect stranger, was screened by the peasantry during a long period, and was received and entertained on no other passport, than as being in danger of being overtaken by justice for having robbed a good master—a magistrate. Another example is still more striking. An individual moving in the upper ranks of life, named Luke Dillon, was tried some years ago for rape committed under most aggravated circumstances—the object of the crime, too, being in his own sphere of life. Sentence of death was commuted to banishment for life; and Luke Dillon appeared to be forgotten. A man, however, one day appeared in this neighbourhood, and gave out that *he* was Luke Dillon, returned from banishment, and setting the law at defiance. The man was a swindler,—not Luke Dillon; but he judged—and he judged correctly—that by pretending to be this individual, who had suffered under a sentence of the law, and who wished to set it at defiance, he should receive protection, and be enabled the easier to exercise his swindling propensities. This man was apprehended, and brought to trial at the sessions; and it appeared in evidence, that he had been concealed, protected, and entertained, as being the infamous wretch who had been banished, and who, it was believed, had been adroit enough to outwit the law.

I was happy to find the Protestant clergy of this part of Ireland greatly respected; and this respect is evinced in singular ways. From time to time, considerable emigration has taken place from this part of Ireland to America; and it is not unusual for remittances to be sent home from the colonies, by those who have emigrated, for the use of their poor relatives. Now it is a curious fact, and a fact that consists with my knowledge, that Catholic emigrants send their remittances

to the care, not of the Catholic priest, but of the Protestant clergyman, to be distributed by him among those pointed out. The same respect for, and reliance on, the Protestant clergyman, is evinced in other ways. It is not at all unusual for Catholics possessed of a little money, to leave the Protestant clergyman their executor, in preference to their own priest, or to any other individual. The Irish peasant has naturally a respect for, and confidence in, a gentleman, of whatever persuasion he is. Ah! how the gentlemen of Ireland have laboured to eradicate this respect, and to destroy this confidence! Yet it still exists; and needs but a little intercourse, and a little kindness, to be at any time restored.

The influence of the Catholic priesthood is seen on all occasions excepting those in which the guardianship of money is concerned; and it is to be regretted that this influence is not always well exerted. Every one who knows anything of magisterial business in Ireland, or who has had opportunities of attending assizes or sessions, well knows that this influence is frequently exerted in co-operation with the peasantry against the law; and in screening criminals from its operation. A hundred instances of this are on record. I know a case, in the county of Longford, of a man being put upon his trial for abduction,—when the priest volunteered to give the man a character; and yet the individual tried had been concerned in two other cases of abduction: and it came out on a cross-examination, that these facts were perfectly known to the volunteering priest.

I do look upon it as most important to the civilization and to the peace of Ireland, that a better order of Catholic priesthood should be raised. Taken, as they at present are, from the very inferior classes, they go to Maynooth, and are reared in monkish ignorance and bigotry; and they go to their cures, with a narrow education, grafted on the original prejudices and habits of thinking, which belong to the class among which their early years were passed. From my considerable experience of Catholic countries, I know enough of Popery to convince me how necessary it is, that its priests should

have all the advantages which are to be gathered beyond the confines of a cloister.

I found in one part of this county great want of accommodation for the Protestant congregation. I allude to the parish of "the Union of Kilglass." There is monstrous abuse here. The bishop is rector, and draws from four to five hundred pounds per annum; and yet there is no church, or Protestant service, in the parish. His lordship, on being respectfully written to on the subject, replied, that there was service in the next parish!

Trading magistrates are not yet extinct in the county Longford: value is still occasionally received for magisterial protection, in the shape of labour,—such as a winter cutting of turf being brought to a man's door. Neither is there much co-operation among the magistracy. They take pleasure in thwarting each other; and it is not unusual for persons imprisoned by the warrant of one magistrate, to be forthwith liberated by the warrant of another. This, I think, ought not to be possible. Crime can never be effectually repressed, where such a state of things exists: and every week's new experience in Ireland, more and more convinced me, that the establishment of a general stipendiary magistracy would be one great step towards the civilization and pacification of the country. Without this, the factions which disturb so many of the counties, cannot be put effectually down. The unpaid magistracy of Ireland cannot, as a body, practise that steady, fearless, and energetic vindication of the law, which must certainly go hand in hand with every measure of equity and conciliation.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Birth-place of Oliver Goldsmith—Pallas-more—the Village of Auburn, and its Identity—Descriptions and Remembrances—Further Ascent of the Shannon up Loch Ree.

AT Ballymahon and its neighbourhood, I was not far from the residence of Miss Edgeworth : but I was compelled to deny myself the pleasure of presenting a letter of introduction to that most talented and estimable lady, as well as to the Earl of Longford, at Castle Pollard, owing to this circumstance,—I was anxious to navigate that second great expansion of the Shannon, above Athlone, called Loch Ree ; and there not being, yet, any public steam navigation above Athlone, though such is contemplated, the Inland Steam Navigation Company politely offered me the exclusive use of a steamer to navigate Loch Ree ; and only two days now intervened before the day when the steamer was to be put at my disposal : and I trust it will not be considered disrespect towards Miss Edgeworth, if I resolved to devote these two days, to a visit to the reputed birth-place of Oliver Goldsmith, and to the scene of “The Deserted Village.”

I know the birth-place of Goldsmith is disputed ; but the undeniable evidences in favour of the identity of “Auburn,” in this neighbourhood, lead me to adopt the belief universally entertained throughout this county. Pallas-more, the birth-place of Goldsmith, is in the parish of Forghany, county Longford. Sir Walter Scott calls it Fernay ; but this is a mistake.

The hamlet of Pallas-more lies about three miles from Ballymahon, and about a mile from the high road which leads to Edgeworthstown, and the eastern part of the county. I walked up a green lane, and across some fields, and found myself at the hamlet. Goldsmith's house is not now in existence : there is only to be seen some small part of the wall of a fence, which seems to have enclosed the orchard. The site of the house is a little triangular field, overgrown with weeds and long grass. A few large ash-trees are scattered here and there ; and close by are a few cottages, a little pond, and a very old orchard, with very old pear trees in it, from which young Oliver, most likely, was wont to regale himself. From this spot, there is a gentle slope down to some low meadows, through which flows the river Inny. The country round is a fruitful enclosed country of corn and pasture. Such is the spot, such the scenes, amidst which the infant genius of Goldsmith was nursed, and where he passed his early childhood. But it is supposed, that when his father, who was probably curate of the chapel of ease at Forghany, was promoted to a benefice in Roscommon, Oliver was put to school at Ballymahon, where, upon the death of his father, Mrs. Goldsmith came and resided. Entries are now to be seen in a grocer's books, of articles furnished to Mrs. Goldsmith.

The village of Lishoy, universally known by the name of " Auburn," is situated about three miles from Ballymahon, in the county of Westmeath. I visited it ; and spent some most pleasing hours amongst the scenes which Goldsmith has made dear to every lover of poetry and nature : and I do not entertain the slightest doubt, that the village of Lishoy is indeed the Auburn of Goldsmith : though it is equally certain, that he has grafted upon its scenery, English pictures of rural things and country life. Here are still the remains of " the busy mill ;" there, the decent church still tops the neighbouring hill ; here, is the village preacher's " modest mansion," and there, the circle of stones, within which stood " the hawthorn bush."

But to speak a little more in detail. The scenery, I say,

fully justifies the belief, that this is the Auburn of Goldsmith. Lishoy was Goldsmith's favourite village; he mentions it often, and always with enthusiasm, in his letters; he passed his early years in it, or in its immediate neighbourhood, and could therefore say, "scenes of my youth." All the scenery of the poem connects it with this village; for although the perishable has partly perished, yet all is remembered to have been, as Goldsmith painted it. The preacher's mansion, now a roofless and windowless tenement, is known to have been the minister's house; and that minister is known to have been the poet's brother, and to have been, not the rector, but the curate, on a small salary (perhaps "40*l.* a-year"), and moreover to have been loved and respected. The church,—not in the village, or its immediate neighbourhood, where a church generally is—but topping "the neighbouring hill," is still seen, as it is described. It is but a few years since the hawthorn bush was in its place; and opposite, "near yonder thorn," stands the alehouse, though not the identical house with the sanded floor, of which Goldsmith speaks. There are many who recollect the schoolhouse: and at some little distance from the village rises a mansion, which belonged to a General Napier, who, some time after the year 1730, is known to have enclosed a domain, and to have ejected the tenantry—

"One only master grasps the wide domain."

I had nearly omitted to observe, that in the name of the house where "news much older than the ale went round," there is a strong evidence in favour of the claim of Lishoy. The alehouse is, and always has been, called "The Three Pigeons." Now, Goldsmith has shown, on more than one occasion, great fondness of this name. In his comedy, "She Stoops to Conquer," Tony says, "I can't stay, I tell you; the Three Pigeons expects me down every moment; there's some fun going forward;" and then, we have afterwards the song, called "the Three Jolly Pigeons." It is a tradition in this neighbourhood, that between terms at Trinity College,

Goldsmith was accustomed to spend his vacation with his brother at Lishoy, and that he used to resort to "the Three Pigeons," where he was looked upon as a prodigy;—all which is greatly more than probable.

They were hours of most pleasing musing, those which I spent in and about "sweet Auburn." It was a fine sunny evening, and a Sunday—

"The coming day,
When toil remitting, lent its turn to play;"

for recollect, it was Sunday in a Catholic country, of which Goldsmith spoke; and indeed the pictures which he gives us of "sports," and "pastimes," and "dancing," would not be applicable to an English village on a Sunday evening. Pastimes literally "circled in the shade,"—and literally,

"Up yonder hill, the village murmur rose;"

and it needed but a slender exercise of imagination, to recreate the whole of the living picture which Goldsmith has chiseled upon every memory. There is, however, as about most Irish villages, a deserted look about Auburn; and sedges and weeds do indeed choke "the glassy brook."

There is no doubt, however, that Goldsmith has grafted English life upon Irish scenery; and that rural life in an English village, and some pictures exclusively English, have been transplanted to Lishoy. "The nicely sanded floor," and "varnished clock," and "hearth" "with flowers and fennel gay," little resemble the Irish village alehouse, with its mud floor, and turf fire. Indeed, an alehouse has no existence in Ireland, since ale is not the beverage of the people. The honest rustic, too, running after "the good man," the Protestant minister,—is not an Irish picture: nor, alas! did it ever happen in Ireland, that

"Health and plenty cheer'd the labouring swain."

But notwithstanding these discrepancies, which are easily

accounted for, from the desire which Goldsmith must have felt to recommend his poem to the English reader, by presenting him with pictures which he could recognise, Lishoy is unquestionably "sweet Auburn;" and Goldsmith took all his pictures of still life, and some others besides, from his favourite village,—of which he says, in one of his letters, "If I go to the opera, where Signora Colomba pours out all the mazes of melody, I sit and sigh for Lishoy fireside, and *Johnny Armstrong's* 'last good night,' from Peggy Golden: or, if I climb up Hampstead hill, I confess it is fine; but then I had rather be placed on the little mount before Lishoy gate, and there take in, to me, the most pleasing horizon in nature."

I cannot conclude this brief notice of Auburn, without expressing my obligations to Mr. Hogan of Auburn-house, whose readiness to communicate information, I gratefully acknowledge; and in whose respect for the memory of Goldsmith, I may perhaps be admitted to participate.

I returned to Athlone, true to my engagement: and next morning, at an early hour, I stepped on board the steam-vessel, so politely furnished to me by the Company. The navigation of the Shannon, above and below Athlone, is connected by a canal; which is necessary, on account of the rapids below the bridge of Athlone, which interrupt the river navigation. The canals connecting the Shannon navigation are extremely defective in every respect; their depth is generally so deficient, as, at certain times, greatly to impede navigation; and little or no attention is paid to them. They are not any way under the management of the Inland Navigation Company.

From Athlone, to the point where the river expansion begins, the distance is about two miles. The banks are productive and cultivated, as might be expected in the neighbourhood of such a town as Athlone; but are not abounding in houses of any description. On entering Loch Ree several islands present themselves,—one of them only, Carberry island, partially wooded. Loch Ree presents a finer expanse

of water than Loch Derg; because, although there are some long lateral reaches, and innumerable bays, the great body of the loch is in a straight line; and the farthest extremity may also be seen, on first entering it. The course I chose, was first to the promontory of St. John's, about half-way up the lake on the Roscommon or Connaught side. Immediately after clearing the islands which lie at the entrance, a finely-wooded bay and mansion, with an adjoining promontory, present themselves. Far to the right, are seen Killynure bay; and the island called Hare island, thickly wooded, and esteemed the most beautiful on the Loch. From the bay and promontory I have mentioned, we coasted up the lake, passing successively, islands, bays, and promontories; with hamlets here and there, and a few gentlemen's houses,—one particularly, called Newpark, striking both from its situation, and from the fine woods that surround it.

Nothing could be more different than the weather this day, and on the day when I navigated Loch Derg. This day it was calm, sunshiny, and warm. Scarcely a ripple was on the surface; and all the promontories and islands looked down upon their counterparts beneath the water. I regret to say that not one prow clove the waters of the loch but my own. In place of being in the very heart of a fruitful and civilized country, we might have been navigating a lake in the interior of New Holland.

St. John's bay and promontory are striking and interesting; and being desirous of landing, we came to anchorage in a small deep cove, just round the headland. I found on shore the extensive ruins of a castle, and of some other buildings; and lingered a considerable while, in admiration of the beautiful banks on the opposite side of the narrow bay, and of the perfect noon-tide repose which dwelt upon land and water.

Having satisfied my curiosity, I returned to the vessel; and the paddles were soon in motion. This is the narrowest part of Loch Ree: it is, here, not much beyond an English mile in breadth; but a little higher, it again expands, though

not to the same extent as lower down, and again contracts into little more than wide river breadth, several miles before reaching Lanesbro'. The only point of interest higher up than St. John's, is Quaker's island,—an island of considerable extent, tolerably well wooded with trees of large growth; and containing ruins of what are called Seven Churches. Three only of these, however, are visible: one ruin is situated about the middle of the island, on open ground; and another is almost concealed in the wood. As ruins, these remains possess no particular interest.

In returning, we kept towards the opposite coast, and passed between Nun's island, and the two large islands called Inchturk and Inchmore. Nun's island, which lies nearly in the centre of the lake, is partly under tillage; and Inchmore is a fine, well cultivated island, with a good house upon it. We now steered for Hare island, and soon anchored off the little quay which has been constructed there. I spent an hour or two very agreeably on Hare island, which, I think, will bear a comparison with most of the islands on Killarney. The island is the property of the Earl of Castlemain, who has erected a lodge upon it, in which his lordship occasionally spends a month or two. The island is charmingly diversified with corn-fields, pasture, and wood; but wood covers the greater part of it; and in walking through and round the island, one lights upon many such sylvan vistas, as remind one of the pencil of Hobbima. There are some beech trees of enormous growth on Hare island, quite equal to any of the timber that grows on Innisfallen. After leaving Hare island, I partook of an excellent repast, which (unknown to me) had been prepared on board; and I returned to Athlone, highly delighted with the many attractions of this noble expansion of the upper Shannon, and most grateful to the public-spirited Company, to whose kindness and liberality I had been indebted for the means of gratifying my curiosity.

Loch Ree is very little inferior, in extent, to Loch Derg. The latter is twenty-three miles in length, from Killaloe to

Portumna; the former extends twenty-one miles, from Athlone to Lanesbro'. The average breadth of Loch Derg is probably greater than that of Loch Ree; but at one part, Loch Ree is wider than any part of Loch Derg. In depth, Loch Ree varies more than Loch Derg. From the Athlone end to St. John's, the depth varies from thirty to fifty feet. Beyond St. John's, up to Lanesbro', it is shallower, varying from ten feet to thirty and upwards. At the bridge of Lanesbro', there are ten and eleven feet of water. In some parts of the Loch, the depth is very great. Near to Hare island, there are 108 feet of water. Loch Ree is the last great expansion of the Shannon. Higher up, are Loch Forbes, Loch Boffin, and Loch Bodarrig, with other smaller expansions. All of these are of sufficient depth for every purpose of navigation; and the whole course of the river is navigable up to Drumsna, Jamestown, Carrick, and Leitrim, which stands *two hundred and fourteen miles from the mouth of the river*. At Athlone, I took leave of the Shannon,—afterwards, however, to return to it at Carrick, at a later stage of my journey.

CHAPTER XVII.

Journey to Galway—Balinasloe—Lord Clancarty—Land, Landlords, Farmers, Rents, and Labourers—Middle-men—A moderate Party wanted—Country between Balinasloe and Galway—Galway—Its resemblances to Spanish Towns—Streets, Houses, and Improvements—The people of Galway—Improvidence of the Upper Classes, and its Results—The Colony of Fishermen, and its Peculiarities—Schools and Nunneries of Galway—Friars—Low state of Literature—Emigration—Trade of Galway—Its advancing Prosperity.

THE direction of my journey now changed. I had now Connaught and Cunnemara before me; and, accordingly, I left Athlone the day following my excursion on Loch Ree, and took the road to Galway; but purposing to halt one day at Balinasloe.

The road between Athlone and Balinasloe is not an interesting one. The country is flat; and being now in Connaught, much timber was not to be looked for. The contrast between Athlone and Balinasloe struck me forcibly. Balinasloe is a remarkably neat, clean-looking town; and one perceives, at a glance, that it is not left to chance; that there is a fostering hand over it; that some one who is able to serve it, feels an interest in it: in short, that there is a resident and public-spirited proprietor. Lord Clancarty is the owner of Balinasloe: and every kind of improvement finds

encouragement at his hands. No stimulus to improvement is more effectual than the practice of Lord Clancarty, in granting leases for ever, on condition of good houses being built.

Everybody has heard of the fair of Balinasloe. It is the greatest fair in Ireland, and has an extensive influence upon prices throughout all the markets of the kingdom. As many as 20,000 head of black cattle, and 90,000 sheep, have often been sold at the fair of Balinasloe. There is not otherwise much trade in Balinasloe, with the exception of a considerable export of oats. The trade of Balinasloe, however, might be greatly benefited by improving the water communication with the Shannon. It is well ascertained that the river Suck might easily be made navigable: and this ought indeed to have been the object, in place of constructing the present canal, which, like most of the other canals in Ireland, is too shallow; and the navigation of which is burdened, besides, with heavy tolls.

I found great want of employment at Balinasloe; eightpence without diet, was the highest rate of wages; and many laboured for sixpence; but even at this low rate, full employment was not to be had. A gentleman with whom I was accidentally in company, offered to procure, on an hour's warning, a couple of hundred labourers at four-pence, even for temporary employment.

I was happy to find the character of the landlords about Balinasloe unexceptionable. Lord Clancarty sets an equitable value on such lands as are to be let, and will not let the land at a higher rent, though competition might raise it to double the value put upon it: and he is, besides, one of those landlords who make a distinction between improving and unimproving tenants, giving to the former every encouragement that an industrious man could desire. I believe I am fully warranted, from personal observation and inquiry, in saying that if any man, holding a fair portion of land under Lord Clancarty, be in poor circumstances, it is his own fault. A considerable part of Lord Clancarty's estates in this neighbourhood, is held under middle-men; and the occupying

tenants are not generally in comfortable circumstances. Conacre prevails pretty extensively in the neighbourhood of Balinasloe; and the average rent paid may be stated at 10*l.* per acre.

I was pleased with Balinasloe and its neighbourhood. The streets are wide and clean, and the houses respectable. The green, where the fair is held, is in the outskirts of the town; and, both in situation and extent, is well adapted to its purpose. I was sorry to find the town stocked with military and police: there had been some recent outrages in the neighbourhood; and an encampment of troops from Athlone had been formed. These outrages, and all the outrages that occurred in any part of Ireland where I chanced to be, were purely agrarian, or the offspring of private faction, and had no connexion whatever with politics. It cannot, however, admit of the smallest doubt, that, throughout Ireland, there is, amongst the great body of the peasantry, a feeling extremely hostile to England and English connexion. The sore feelings of a conquered people yet cling to the descendants of the conquered; there is a hankering after what they deem their rightful possessions; and an indistinct notion that, one day or other, they will have their right. I have been assured by many in Ireland, that not only do these feelings exist, but that a determination exists also; and that a fitting time only is waited for, in order to shew it. I candidly confess, I have no belief in this; and I know that I have found nothing in Ireland to encourage the belief, beyond the assertions of individuals, who appeared to me to be possessed of no exclusive information or extraordinary lights upon the subject.

Amongst the many opinions which I heard in Ireland, connected with the condition of the country, I heard one expression in Balinasloe, which had, at all events, the merit of novelty. It was, that all the evils of Ireland were owing to the system, now gaining ground among landlords, of getting rid of middle-men. That respectable middle-men, who are, in fact, resident yeomen, are useful in a neighbourhood, cannot be doubted: but I feel myself well entitled to

assert, that it was a happy hour for Ireland, when landlords first began to perceive that their own interests were concerned in ridding their estates of middle-men. John, who holds a hundred acres under my lord, may be a most respectable man : and if he sub-let his land to James, Andrew, and Thomas, without giving them the power to sub-let farther, he would be a useful resident yeoman. But then, there is no end to the system, when a landowner lets the property slip out of his own hands. James, Andrew, and Thomas also aspire to be middle-men ; and each lets his thirty acres out, in three more portions of ten acres each, at a greatly higher rent than they pay to John. Their tenants, again, find that, owing to the competition for land, more can be got by letting their ten acres, in half-a-dozen portions, than by tilling their own acres ; and thus the estate of one hundred acres is held by no fewer than fifty-four occupying tenants, under thirteen middle-men, in four distinct classes, each of which must live out of the excess of rent paid by those under them, beyond what *they* pay to those immediately above them ; while the real produce of the land is insufficient to maintain the tillers of it.

I found, about Balinasloe, a considerable sprinkling of men of moderate views, and I am happy to think that this party is on the increase. Ireland stands in need of a moderate party—a party that equally reprobates the extreme views of high Catholic and high Conservative. By a moderate party, I do not mean men who would advocate an imbecile, wavering, and timorous policy ; but men who, along with the advocacy of healing measures, would at the same time uphold the necessity for an energetic and vigorous enforcement of the law ; and who would, above all, reprobate any preference of one party over another.

I now left Balinasloe for Galway, and passed through an uninteresting country—flat, bare, ill-cultivated, and poor : hedges had now given place to stone walls, which do not improve the appearance of a country ; the cabins, by the wayside, were as bad as any I had seen ; and the inmates apparently as wretched. The only place of the smallest interest,

on the road, is the town of Lochree, which contains a ruined abbey, of the early part of the fourteenth century, and which is not altogether unworthy of a visit.

Galway, the capital of the wild West, is a large, and, on many accounts, an extremely interesting town. I had heard that I should find some traces of its Spanish origin; but I was not prepared to find so much to remind me of that land of romance. At every second step, I saw something to recal Spain to my recollection. I found the wide entries and broad stairs of Cadiz and Malaga; the arched gateways, with the outer and inner railing, and the court within,—needing only the fountain, and flower vases, to emulate Seville. I found the sculptured gateways, and grotesque architecture, which carried the imagination to the Moorish cities of Granada and Valencia. I even found the little sliding wicket, for observation, in one or two doors, reminding one of the secrecy, mystery, and caution observed, where gallantry and superstition divide life between them. Besides these Spanish resemblances, Galway has a more Popish aspect than any other Irish town. It contains friars, as well as priests; in the Catholic chapels, devotees are found at all hours of the day; and in the burying-ground are seen, in hundreds, those little black crosses which distinguish all the continental burying-grounds.

There are many good streets in Galway, and excellent, if not splendid houses; and with the exception of Cork and Limerick, it had more the air of a place of importance than any other town I had seen, though less of bustle than Clonmel, or perhaps even than Tralee. In population, Galway ranks, at present, the fifth town in Ireland, coming immediately after Belfast. It contains about 34,000 inhabitants. I found an extensive dock now in course of being constructed, which, it is expected, will have a very favourable effect, when completed, upon the prosperity of the town. Several hundred labourers find employment on the work, at ten-pence per day; but the work cannot proceed during rain; and, in this uncertain climate, as at Tralee, on the ship canal, it too

often happens that the workmen are dismissed, with a pittance, after working half a day.

The population of Galway, and its neighbourhood, has a picturesque appearance when congregated. The windows of the hotel (the only one in Galway) faced the market-place; and I could not help fancying the surprise which an Englishman would feel, if, without the intermediate journey, he could be at once placed in the window of the hotel of Galway. The whole female population—congregated in hundreds—wore red jackets and red petticoats; and not a single pair of shoes and stockings was to be seen throughout the market-place. Boys, with scarcely any covering at all, except a waistcoat, and a shirt, hanging in strips behind and before, were exercising their various juvenile propensities; and, in every few pence laid out on potatoes (for potatoes were the only commodity at market), there were so many gestures, so much loud talking, and, apparently, such threatening attitudes, that one expected, every moment, to see the market-place converted into a battle field. Most of the laborious work was performed by the women. They appeared to think nothing of whipping up a sack of potatoes, weighing eighteen stone, and trudging away under the load, as if it were no way inconvenient.

The same contrasts are exhibited here, as elsewhere in Ireland, between the upper and lower classes; and I fear the line of separation is not entirely confined to externals. I had an opportunity of conversing with many landowners here and in the neighbourhood; and I regretted to find among them so little sympathy with the condition of the poor. I also found amongst them, generally, the greatest terror of any legislative provision for the poor. One great cause of this, and of the oppression of landlords throughout the west of Ireland, is the improvidence of the upper classes. So many of them are distressed men, that their own necessities force them to be hard on tenants, and prompt them to grasp at the highest rent offered. Thus, every class which lives[†] becomes necessitous; improvements, where ever

wanted by the farmer to pay his rent, and by the landlord to keep his head above water, are impossible : and the labour market being over-stocked, the necessities of the poor are taken advantage of ; and the services of the labourer (who frequently works fourteen hours a day) are paid at the rate of sixpence, and even five-pence,—which, during a part of the time I was in Ireland, scarcely sufficed to purchase one stone of potatoes.

The fishermen of Galway form a large portion of the population, but are, in fact, a distinct people. They inhabit that part of the shore which lies on the right of the harbour, apart from the town, and which is called the Claddagh, and were formerly ruled by a mayor, and by laws exclusively their own. This usage, however, has been some time discontinued ; though they still are governed in all matters regarding fishing, by their own by-laws, and are still an interesting and a peculiar people. I spent the greater part of a day in the Claddagh, and found much to interest me. The Claddagh is quite a distinct town : it contains innumerable streets, lanes, rows, and squares, all of cabins, forming altogether a compact and large village. About 1700 fishermen reside here ; and these, with their wives and families, which are generally very numerous, must form a population little short of 6000. The boats, great and small, employed in the fishery, exceed a thousand ; but in this number they reckon the bays of Cunnemara, as far as the Killeries. The manner in which fishing labour is paid, is by a share of the take of fish : *i. e.*, the owner of the boat shares (though not equally) the quantity of fish taken, amongst those whose services he engages.

This fishing colony is on the increase. I noticed a great number of new cabins ; and I was informed that there has been a corresponding increase in the number of boats.

This is an industrious people. I went into, and looked into, hundred of cabins ; and there was scarcely one in which I did not see the females busily engaged in spinning, mending nets. These they make not only for use, but
The profit, however, is small. To spin and make

a net, requires from eight to ten days ; the price of the material is 4*s.*, and it sells for 5*s.* ; so that it is hard work to make a shilling a week by this trade.

I found the cabins in this colony very far superior to those of any country labourers I had seen. An air of decency was visible about them all. I saw none without chairs and bedsteads, and a respectable display of crockery ; and I may conclude, both from observation and inquiry, that there is not generally any lack of potatoes and fish among the inhabitants. The fish chiefly taken on this fishery, are herring, cod, haddock, and brem.

The people of the Claddagh are perfect exclusives. They live entirely among themselves,—seldom leave the Claddagh, unless merely to take their fish to market ; hold no intercourse with the townspeople ; and marry entirely among each other. The *tocher* brought by a girl on her marriage is generally a share of a boat.

Education is at a very low ebb in this colony. The Claddagh contains no school ; and it is next to impossible to prevail with the fishermen to send their children to schools in town ; and the active life of a fisherman begins at such early years, that even if there were greater facilities for education, but little progress could be made in it.

The winter fishery of Galway supplies a great part of the country ; and the trade of fish-huckster is an extensive one. The fishermen have other means of making money than by their fisheries. When their boats are not employed in fishing, they employ them in the conveyance of sea-weed and turf, to and from their own and the more distant bays of Connaught. Boat-building is also a trade with them, not for their own use only, but for sale.

In the town of Galway are several extensive schools,—two of them receiving aid from the new Education Board. One of these belongs to the monks' schools : the other is under the care of the sisters of the Presentation Nunnery : and in each of them, about 500 children are educated. In many respects,

I found reason to be pleased with these schools: there appeared to be no want of attention on the part of the instructors; the pupils seemed to have profited by their instructions in reading and writing; and one humane regulation particularly pleased me:—a plentiful breakfast of stir-about and treacle is provided for the poor children, before they enter upon their daily tasks. At the same time, I cannot think the funds of the Education Board are legitimately applied in supporting the nunnery and monks' schools. I understood the principle of the board to be, that there was to be no preference of one religion over another; and that the schools were to be so constituted, that Protestant and Catholic might be able to join conscientiously in their support. But here, in this nunnery school at Galway, are all the paraphernalia of Popery: the building is a convent; the teachers are nuns, with beads and rosaries; the chapel has all the accompaniments and distinguishing marks of Catholic chapels of the most Catholic countries; and it does appear to me utterly impossible that Protestants should countenance schools of this description.

Galway contains several nunneries, —two of them very large establishments; and there are also three friaries. The mention of this word suggests to me an observation of some importance, connected with the question as to the payment of the Roman Catholic clergy by government. It appears to me to admit of no doubt, that if, by way of disarming the Roman Catholic clergy, government were to adopt some proposition of the kind once submitted in Parliament, it would be absolutely necessary to act up to the letter of that provision in the Emancipation Bill, by which the settlement of friars is prohibited. Otherwise, whatever influence the Roman Catholic clergy lost, would be but transferred to the friars, and nothing would be gained by the measure. Indeed, in many parts, this transference of influence has already partly taken place. Friars, wherever they establish themselves, are in high favour; and applying to Ireland the observation and

experience I have had in other Catholic countries, I would say, that the secular clergy have no chance, in a competition for public favour, with the stricter body.

The Catholic and Protestant population of Galway live together amicably enough. This is most commonly observed, where there is a great preponderance on either side. In Galway, the Protestant population is scarcely one in a hundred.

Galway is much resorted to for sea-bathing; and along the bay towards the west, a great many houses have been built for the accommodation of strangers. The situation has nothing to recommend it but the sea: for the country round Galway, and particularly on the western side, is as ugly as flatness, sterility, and want of wood, can make it.

Literature is at a very low ebb in Galway. No regular bookseller's shop is to be found in this town, containing between 30,000 and 40,000 inhabitants: there are shops, indeed, where books may be ordered, and where some books may be purchased; but the demand is not sufficient to support a shop which sells books solely. I need scarcely say, that the town contains no public or circulating library; and I could not learn, that either in the town, or in its neighbourhood, any private book society existed.

It is a mistake to suppose, that it is only from the Protestant parts of Ireland that emigration flows. From Galway and its neighbourhood, emigration is extensive, and is at present on the increase. During the early part of the summer of 1834, upwards of 500 had emigrated; and this was a larger number than had been known to emigrate during the whole of any preceding year. An emigrant ship, with seventy passengers, left the port for America, while I was in Galway. I spoke to a considerable number of the emigrants. They were mostly agricultural labourers, possessed of but very little beyond their passage-money. A few artisans also were amongst the number; and I spoke to one small farmer, who had a purse of 30*l.*, and who was emigrating with his wife and

family. I found no Protestant amongst those with whom I conversed.

Galway enjoys a tolerably large export trade, chiefly in wheat, oats, and flour. This trade has trebled within the last fifteen years; and there has been a corresponding increase in the buildings required for the export trade, such as corn stores, and corn mills, many of which are very extensive. From 1st September, 1833, to 25th July, 1834, 6,018 tons of wheat were exported, chiefly to Liverpool; 7,212 tons of oats, chiefly to London; 1,554 tons of flour; 406 tons of barley; and 50 tons of oatmeal. The only manufactures of Galway are distilleries and breweries, and one paper mill.

Galway may be considered an improving town; and there is every probability of a still farther improvement: much is anticipated from the completion of the dock; and it is also in contemplation to cut a canal from Galway to Loch Corrib, by which an extensive interior district would be laid open to the export trade of Galway. Besides its export trade, Galway possesses a considerable general trade in timber, iron, &c. The retail trade, too, is excellent of necessity; for, east of Galway, there is no town of any importance nearer than Athlone: and to the west, Galway commands the whole of Cunnemara, as well as the country northward, which lies towards Castlebar and Westport.

I inquired the prices of provisions before leaving Galway. Mutton was 6*d.* per lb.; beef, 5*d.*; lamb, 4*s.* the quarter; pork, 2*d.* per lb.; a turkey, 2*s.*; a goose, 2*s.*; a couple of good fowls, 1*s.*; eggs, 4*d.* per dozen; butter, 1*s.* per lb.; a good cod fish, 1*s.* 6*d.*; potatoes, 3½*d.* per stone. The wages of a man servant are about 10*l.*; and of a female servant, half that sum.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CUNNEMARA.

Journey through Cunnemara—Ouchterard, and Loch Corrib—Mr. Martin's Gate-house—Inland Navigation—Condition of the People—from Ouchterard to Ma'aun—Chain of Lakes—Cabins, and deceptive Appearances—Scenery—Heath—Ma'am, and its neighbourhood—A Surprise—State of the Mountaineers—Ascent of the Mountains—A Visit to a Pattern—Scenery and Pictures—Sketch of what a Pattern is—A Fight, and its Results—A few words on Irish Fighting—Excursion to Cong, and Loch Mask.

I WAS now about to leave for awhile the more civilized part of Ireland behind me; and to travel through Cunnemara and Joyce's country, those districts which are the least visited; but of whose natural attractions, I had heard all that could render the anticipation of my journey agreeable. And I resolved now for a little while to disencumber myself of all those things which, from experience, I know to be drawbacks upon the enjoyment of a journey like this; and which impede the free exercise of a man's will,—be they carriage, or horse, or baggage, or any thing that, when a man wishes to do this or that, forces his attention, and claims to be considered. With only such incumbrance then as may suit a pedestrian, I took the road to Ouchterard.

There is nothing very inviting to the traveller, in leaving Galway. I found a flat uninteresting country on all sides, and the first view which one obtains of Loch Corrib does not

impress one with very high notions of its beauty. It was a coldish blowy day, however, when nothing looks well ; and as Loch Corrib, at least the lower part of it, is not in Cunnemara, and as, besides, I had never heard any very high character of it, I was not disappointed. The upper part of Loch Corrib, however, is greatly superior to the lower part ; though nowhere on its banks can the scenery be said to be striking, or fine.

Five or six miles from Galway, I found myself leaving the flat country, and getting amongst hills ; low indeed, and with no character but that of bleakness. These hills extend on the left, as far as the sea bays, and are entirely uncultivated and uninhabited, unless at particular seasons, when cattle from the lower grounds are sent there to graze, under the charge of herds, who make their temporary homes among the hills.

After an agreeable, though not a highly interesting walk, I reached Ouchterard early in the afternoon, and there had the first experience of a Cunnemara inn ; though indeed Ouchterard is not properly in Cunnemara, but only on the confines of it. The inn was much the same as may be met with in the remoter parts of Scotland, where ham and eggs, oat cake, butter, and whiskey, form the staple of one's dinner. At Ouchterard, however, as in many other parts of Ireland, I was indebted more to private hospitality than to the inn larder.

The situation of Ouchterard is agreeable. It is a straggling little village, part of it straggling as far as the loch ; and with one of the prettiest and most limpid streams in the world dancing through it. Just above the village, there is a succession of very pretty rapids, almost cascades ; and on a beautiful green bank, at the foot of them, stands a pretty cottage, the property of Mr. Martin of Galway, as he and his predecessors have long been generally called. This house, Mr. Martin calls his gate-house ; and it is not inaptly named ; for the road from this spot passes, with very little interruption, through his estate, to his house at Ballinahinch—a dis-

tance of twenty-six Irish miles. The parish of Ouchterard is thirty-three miles long, and nearly fourteen broad, and contains about 9000 inhabitants, of whom from thirty to forty are Protestants.

The banks of Loch Corrib, at Ouchterard, are cultivated, pretty well wooded, but rather tame and uninteresting. The lake, however, is a noble expanse of water, and cannot be even glanced at on a map, without awakening reflections as to the important results which may be anticipated from its proposed connexion with the bay of Galway, as a means of improving the vast tract of country adjoining its banks. The lough extends over a surface of no less than 30,000 acres; it embraces a coast of fifty miles in extent; it is only thirteen feet above the level of Galway bay; and contains islands, whose superficies is a thousand acres.

The people in the immediate neighbourhood of Ouchterard are poorly circumstanced. Most of them are very small holders of land, not taken by the acre, but in the lump; and for which they pay from 4*l.* to 8*l.* rent; and grow on it potatoes and oats. Those who are able to keep cows are comparatively comfortable; but it is not until we penetrate farther into Cunnemara, that cows are pretty universally kept. Many persons were so miserably off when I visited Ouchterard, that the parish priest had been obliged to become security for the price of a little meal, to prevent them from starving. I have already mentioned the distressed condition of the landlords, as one cause of the poor condition of the lower orders: but I ought to have added, that in very many cases, landlords have no power of being kind or otherwise, and no control over their own property, the management of which is vested in persons acting under legal authority. Such individuals *must* have rents; crops are seized, cows driven, and all the results of improvidence amongst the upper classes are visited upon every link in the chain of agriculturists.

The quantity of bog-land about Ouchterard is considerable; but there are great facilities for its improvement. I saw

excellent crops of oats, the second year of cultivation only, in the midst of bog-land.

In the little river which runs through Ouchterard, pearls are found. I saw some very beautiful specimens,—some as large as peas, and with a slightly pink tint.

The direct road through Cunnemara runs along the chain of small lochs, of which Loch Uril is one, to Ballinahinch and Clifden, skirting the Mamturk range, and the Twelve Pins of Bunarola. Before taking this line, however, I was desirous of seeing that part of Cunnemara which borders on Joyce's country north of the Mamturk mountains, and at the extreme head of Loch Corrib:—with this intention I left Ouchterard. The road which I took is the same, for seven or eight miles, as the Clifden line. At first, it is not highly interesting, but merely wild. I journeyed up the bank of the little stream which runs through Ouchterard, and skirted several small lakes into which it expands; and then found myself approaching mountain scenery. I was now in Cunnemara: with me, mountain regions and buoyant spirits are synonymous.

I saw at a glance, from the character and forms of the mountains before me, that my expectations were to be realized; and I pressed forward to the enjoyment of the banquet. My progress, however, received a slight check. It had been lowering all the morning; mists had been gradually rising from the valleys; and when less than half-way on my journey, I was overtaken by one of the most tremendous torrents that ever descended on mountain regions. I found shelter, however, in a cabin near to the road; and had an opportunity of making some few inquiries. Judging from the interior comforts of the cabin, I should have concluded that its inmates were miserably poor; but they were not so wretched as they appeared to be. They paid fifty shillings for as much land as fed ten sheep and two cows; and they grew a little oats, and some potatoes besides.

I shall have many other opportunities of remarking the more favourable circumstances in which the mountain land occupiers are placed, than those holding small portions of land

in the more fertile districts. At present, however, I shall pursue my journey.

The rain having ceased, I left the cabin, and proceeded on my way. For a mile or two farther, the road continued in the same direction, still skirting a succession of little lakes, most of which were fringed with the beautiful white water-lily, reclining on its broad leaf: and now I diverged from the Clifden road, and struck directly to the right towards the mountains. The scenery here is extremely wild and solitary; there is no attempt at cultivation, and no habitation of any kind: I had not even a stream for a companion. Two old grey crows, however, hopped from rock to rock along with me by the road-side.

A second tremendous fall of rain again sent me to a shelter,—not a house but a projecting rock,—which fortunately stood near to the road, and which had a roof and two side walls—more than many cabins have. Not a drop of rain reached me here; and the beautiful heath which bloomed around me, and at my feet, served to beguile the time. I never saw in any part of Britain such heath as I gathered here. I could compare it only with the heath I have gathered in the province of Valencia, or on the coast of Sardinia.

Lighter drops and a sudden gleam of sunshine sent me from my shelter. Another mile of ascent brought me within sight of my destination—a single house far below in the hollow of the hills; and opened a very striking view of a mountain amphitheatre; and soon after, I reached Ma'am; or, as the inn-keeper has christened the house, "Corrib-Head Hotel."

The scenery of Ma'am is fine, very fine. If a lake filled the hollow of the mountains, Killarney might tremble for its supremacy; for the outline of the mountain range surpasses in picturesque form any of the ranges that bound the lakes of Killarney. At Ma'am, one is forcibly struck with the advantages which would be opened up to this district, by the extension of the navigation of Loch Corrib to the sea. Fine slopes of reclaimable land border the deep stream that, at

the distance of half a mile, flows into Loch Corrib : and the same boats that would carry to market the produce of the cultivated land would bring from the bay of Galway sand-sea-weed, and lime, to be laid upon the yet unimproved wastes.

I made Ma'am my head-quarters for several days ; and had every reason to be pleased with the spot. The inn is of rare excellence. The first day I arrived, a dinner was placed on the table, at a couple of hours' notice,—of roast kid milk-fed, veal pie, apple pie, and abundance of concomitants.

In the course of my excursions in the neighbouring country, I chanced to join company with a man who was sauntering on the road, without stockings or shoes, and clothed in tatters. I walked along with him, and he invited me into his house, to take a drink of milk. To look at the man, one might well have doubted if he owned a house at all ; and to say the truth, the house was about as miserable a hovel as I ever entered : and yet, will it be credited ? this man paid 30*l.* of rent ; and held sufficient land to feed sixty sheep, twelve black cattle, four cows, and several horses, and had about five acres besides, under tillage ! This man possessed the means of living in perfect comfort ; he had certainly a fair bargain of his land ; but he was an uncivilized being : and had no more ideas of comfort, or of the usages of civilized people, than any other savage.

I should certainly say, that the peasantry of this mountainous district have the means of being comfortable : land is not generally high let ; cows are universally kept ; fish attainable for the trouble of taking them ; and the grazings of the mountain parts of the farms are let to cattle dealers in Galway, and elsewhere, who pay 1*s.* a month, for cattle, per head, and 3*d.* for sheep. Generally speaking, there is a disposition to overstock farms ; and it frequently happens, that a farmer does not raise even enough of potatoes for his consumption, although he has a sufficiency of good land. Here, as elsewhere, there are some very small holders of land under the farmers ; and these are poor enough ! The day

after I reached Ma'am, I climbed, not Mamturk mountain, but the mountain adjoining to it, and little inferior in elevation. It was an interesting walk: I found the hills covered with the strongly odoriferous bog myrtle; and with many beautiful varieties of heath, among which I found some specimens of the purest white. The ascent was not difficult; and the view was extensive and interesting. The greater part of Cunnamara and Joyce's country was laid open: in one direction the sea line was visible; Loch Corrib and Loch Mask were on the opposite horizon; and in every other direction the mountain ranges of the immediate district, as well as of the more distant county of Mayo, occupied the picture. I found on the mountain land—which but a few years before was bog—excellent crops of oats and barley, the oats growing very high up the mountain side. I looked into a farm-house, on my return, where a substantial farmer lived. He paid 80*l.* of rent; and owned 700 sheep and 200 head of black cattle.

I had frequently, since coming to Ireland, heard of a *pattern* being held, and had been asked if I had seen a pattern? It fortunately happened, that on the second day of my sojourn at Ma'am, a very celebrated pattern was to be held, on a singular spot, high up amongst the mountains, on a little plain, on the top of the pass between Mamturk and the neighbouring mountain,—an elevation of about 1200 feet;—and I, of course, resolved to be present. A pattern was, originally, a religious ceremony, and was, and still is, always celebrated near to a holy well: but although some still frequent the pattern for devotional purposes, it is now resorted to chiefly as a place of recreation, where, after the better disposed have partaken of the innocent amusements of dancing and moderate hilarity, drunkenness and fighting wind up the entertainment.

I was accompanied, in my excursion, by the innkeeper; and the road being rather toilsome, I was accommodated with a horse. This, however, was a luxury which I was soon obliged to disencumber myself of; for a great part, or rather, by far

the greater part, of the road being through bogs, I soon found the horse to be a dangerous companion, and was glad to leave him behind, at a cabin door, and make my way through the bog on foot. It requires some practice to be an expert bog-trotter; to know where one may safely rest one's weight; where one must skip lightly from tuft to tuft; and where one must not risk an advance at all. I had had some experience of bogs before coming to Ireland, and proved so apt a learner in bog-trotting, that, during the whole of my journey, I never committed so great an error of judgment as to sink even knee-deep.

The ascent to the spot where the pattern was to be held was picturesque in the extreme. Far up the winding way, for miles before us, and for miles behind too, groups were seen moving up the mountain side,—the women, with their red petticoats, easily distinguishable: some were on foot, some few on horseback, and some rode double. About half-way up we overtook a party of lads and lasses, beguiling the toil of the ascent by the help of a piper, who marched before, and whose stirring strains every now and then prompted an advance in jig-time up the steep mountain-path. Some few we met coming away,—sober people, who had performed their *station* at the holy well, and had no desire to be partakers in the sort of amusement that generally follows.

Everybody in this part of the country is called Joyce; and the spot where the pattern is held is claimed by the Joyces to be in Joyce's country: but this is not admitted by the Cunnemara boys; and accordingly, two factions,—the Joyces and their opponents,—usually hold patterns near the same ground, though not close together; but yet so near as to make it impossible that the meetings should break up without a *scrimmage*. The Joyces are a magnificent race of men; the biggest, and stoutest, and tallest, I have seen in Ireland; eclipsing even the peasantry of the Tyrol; and I believe, indeed, their claims on this head are universally admitted. I shall by and by have an opportunity of introducing the reader to *big Jack Joyce*, when I visit him in his own house.

When I reached the summit of the Pass, and came in sight of the ground, it was about four in the afternoon, and the pattern was at its height: and truly, in this wild mountain spot, the scene was most striking and picturesque. There were a score tents or more,—some open at the sides, and some closed; hundreds in groups were seated on the grass, or on the stones, which lie abundantly there. Some old persons were yet on their knees, beside the holy well, performing their devotions; and here and there apart, and half-screened by the masses of rocks which lay about, girls of the better order, who had finished their pastimes, were putting off their shoes and stockings to trot homeward; or were arranging their dress; or perhaps,—though more rarely,—exchanging a word or two with a Joyce, or a Cunnemara boy. All was quiet when I reached the ground; and I was warmly welcomed as a stranger, by many who invited me into their tents. Of course I accepted the invitation; and the pure potheen circulated freely.

By and by, however, some boastful expression of a Joyce appeared to give offence to several at the far end of the tent; and something loud and contemptuous was spoken of by two or three in a breath. The language, which, in compliment to me had been English, suddenly changed to Irish. Two or three glasses of potheen were quickly gulped by most of the boys; and the innkeeper who had accompanied me, and who sat by me, whispered that there would soon be some fighting. I had seen abundance of fighting on a small scale, in Ireland; but, I confess, I had been barbarous enough to wish I might see a regular faction fight: and now I was likely to be gratified. Taking the hint of the innkeeper, I shook hands with the "boys" nearest to me, right and left; and taking advantage of a sudden burst of voices, I stepped over my bench, and, retiring from my tent, took up a safe position on some neighbouring rocks.

I had not long to wait: out sallied the Joyces and a score of other "boys" from several tents at once, as if there had been some preconcerted signal; and the flourishing of shille-

lahs did not long precede the using of them. Any one, to see an Irish fight, for the first time, would conclude that a score or two must inevitably be put *hors de combat*. The very flourish of a regular shillelah, and the shout that accompanies it, seems to be the immediate precursors of a fractured skull; but the affair, though bad enough, is not so fatal as it appears to be: the shillelahs, no doubt, do sometimes descend upon a head, which is forthwith a broken head; but they oftener descend upon each other: and the fight soon becomes one of personal strength. The parties close and grapple; and the most powerful man throws his adversary: fair play is but little attended to: two or three often attack a single man; nor is there a cessation of blows, even when a man is on the ground. On the present occasion, five or six were disabled: but there was no homicide; and after a *scrimmage*, which lasted perhaps ten minutes, the Joyces remained masters of the field. The women took no part in the fight; but they are not always so backward: it is chiefly, however, when stones are the weapons, that women take a part by supplying the combatants with missiles. When the fight ended, there were not many remaining, excepting those who were still in the tents, and who chanced to be of neither faction. Most of the women had left the place when the quarrel began, and some of the men too. I noticed, after the fight, that some, who had been opposed to each other, shook hands and kissed; and appeared as good friends as before. The sun was nearly set, when the pattern finally broke up; and, with the bright sun flaming down the cleft, and gilding all the slopes, the scene was even more striking now than when we ascended. The long line of pedestrians and horses stretched many miles down the lengthened defile; and the mountain notes of the pipe, and the occasional burst of voices, and the lowing of the cattle, roused by these unwonted sounds, filled all the hollow of the hills. It was quite dark when we reached Ma'am.

Before proceeding on my journey, I made an excursion from Ma'am to Cong, and to the foot of Loch Mask. I went

on horseback ; and as I did not find the journey highly interesting, I will not detail the particulars of it. The road skirts Loch Corrib all the way to Cong, but does not conduct the traveller through any very striking scenery. The banks are scarcely elevated enough to be bold ; and are not cultivated enough to be beautiful. Some caves are shown in the neighbourhood of Cong ; but they do not possess any high interest. The distance from Cong to Ross-hill, and to the shore of Loch Mask, is about four miles : and Ross-hill is worth a visit. Loch Mask is not striking ; the banks are not generally very elevated, and are deficient in picturesque beauty.

CHAPTER XIX.

CUNNEMARA.

Journey from Ma'am to Roundstone and Clifden—Capabilities of Cunnemara—The Waste Lands of Ireland—A Storm, and its consequences—A Cunnemara Potheen-house—Merry-making—Charming Scenery—Derry Clare—Ben-Gowr and Lettery—Loch Ina—Herds of Cattle and Troops of Horses—Ballinahinch—A Solitary Burying-ground—Roundstone—Reclaimed Bogs—Rotation of Crops—Manure—Facilities offered for the extension of Cultivation—The Landlords of Cunnemara—Urrisbeg—Singular Prospect—Wild Flowers—The King's Writ.

I INTENDED to have left Ma'am, to proceed on my journey through Cunnemara, early the next morning; but the weather was so threatening, that I delayed till after mid-day. In order to gain the road to Clifden, it was necessary to return to the point at which I left it, in going to Ma'am. I then turned to the westward, and pursued my journey. The road still lay along that chain of small lakes which extends all the way from Ouchterard, almost the whole length of Cunnemara; and it was impossible to cast the eye over the vast inclined plains of bog-land, skirted by fine water levels, which seemed to invite draining, without feeling a conviction of the immense capabilities of this part of Ireland; and seeing, in prospective, these vast tracts bearing abundant produce,—and the chains of lochs carrying that produce,—on the one side, to Loch Corrib and Galway bay; and, on the other, to Birterbuy bay, or one of the other bays which lie to the westward. Some improvements are at present in

progress by a gentleman who holds land under Mr. St. George, one of the proprietors of Cunnemara : but I believe there are certain obstacles in the way of success. I question whether much ever will or can be done, in cultivating the waste reclaimable lands of Ireland, by the proprietors themselves. Capital and enterprise are alike wanting. This, however, it is—the cultivation of the reclaimable wastes, that can alone provide permanent employment for the people, and effect a real change in their condition. To cultivate lands where the produce cannot be taken cheap to market, would of course be the act of an insane person ; but if government were to provide, in the first place, for the transmission of produce, by the construction of roads, wherever wanted, and of canals, or river navigation, wherever practicable (by which employment would be found for the people, and poverty and idleness, the great feeders of agitation, in part removed), we are entitled to believe, that capital would flow in the direction where it would be wanted, and where a certain return would await its employment.

When I left Ma'am, I anticipated a fine afternoon ; but I was mistaken in my judgment. The mountains became gradually obscured ; the mists began to rise from the defiles and ravines ; and I quickened my pace, to reach a house called *Flynn's*, or the half-way,—the only house, I think, that presents itself in a distance of about twelve miles. Shortly before reaching this resting-place, I passed a fine lake on the right, adorned with wooded islands. It is singular, that throughout the greater part of Cunnemara, the only wood that is to be found is on the islands in the lakes. The rain had begun some time ago ; and it came down in such torrents, that long before reaching the half-way house, I was thoroughly drenched. My portmanteau I had sent from Ma'am, to await my arrival some days afterwards at a spot called *Jack Joyce's* ; but I had hired a ragged lad to carry all that was necessary for a drenched man ; and I was soon in a condition to pay my respects to the inmates in the kitchen,—which was also fain to serve as a parlour. I found the kitchen full, and

abundance of merriment going forward. There was a piper and a fiddler, both of whom had been at the pattern ; there were Joyces and Flynns—men and women—boys and girls ; and here I saw by far the finest specimen of an Irish girl I had yet seen in Ireland. She was a magnificent creature, the daughter of the hostess, with a fine, expressive, and somewhat aristocratic face, and a form of perfect symmetry : her sweetheart was there—a Joyce, only seventeen years of age, but six feet three inches in height, and weighing upwards of sixteen stone : the girl was eighteen : but the match was not perfectly approved of, he being a Joyce, and she a Flynn ; the Joyces and the Flynns being not entirely as one.

The rain continuing to come down in torrents, it was out of the question to continue my journey ; and therefore all I had to do, was to make myself as agreeable to the company as possible. It is no difficult task to become a sudden favourite with the lower classes in Ireland : there is always a disposition to look favourably on a stranger ; and if that stranger lays aside all pretensions,—is familiar with those whom he meets, and accommodates himself to circumstances,—he is sure to be treated, not merely with civility, but with respect, and even affection. Dancing was the great amusement of the evening : and excellent dancers some of the party were. I was not a novice in the mysteries of the jig ; and did not decline the invitation of the hostess, and her beautiful daughter. The more vigorously I danced, the greater was my popularity ; and at the conclusion of every turn, “ Long life to your honour ! ” was the universal exclamation. Nor was it possible to decline a little potheen ; though this I took in greater moderation than the dancing. I don’t know where all the household and visitors got beds : I saw no bed-room, excepting the one I occupied ; and I would, very willingly, that it had been occupied by anybody but myself. To have looked for a clean bed here would have been ridiculous.

At an early hour next morning, I left the half-way house, particularly favoured by the weather. The country now became, every mile of the way, more interesting. The chain

of lakes still continued on the left; and the mountain views on the right became bolder and more striking. There are not many finer ranges of mountains of the same altitude than this. Derry Clare, Ben Gowr, and Lettery, are all finely-formed mountains. There appeared to be on the right an inviting hollow among the hills, which seemed to promise a reward for the deviation from the road; and I followed my inclination. The hollow was about four miles distant: and I found, as I expected, a deeply embosomed lake, which wanted only an easy access to its banks, in order to enjoy a high reputation for the boldness and picturesque outline of its mountain boundaries. I rested for a little while in a house at no great distance from it; and found the owner in sufficiently comfortable circumstances. He had a hundred head of black cattle, and many horses, and several cows, and about five acres under potatoes and oats, and paid only 15*l.* on a lease of ninety-nine years. I was told of a lake, called Loch Ina, farther to the north; and from a shoulder of Derry Clare, I obtained a view over it. It appeared to be partially wooded, and very solitary and remote. I did not visit it; but retraced my steps to the point where I had left the road. Everywhere along this line of country, the views are most pleasing. The mountain outline is highly picturesque in its form; the slopes are dotted with sheep; and on the low grounds, vast herds of cattle, and troops of horses, are seen feeding; and the wild gambols, and graceful motions, of these scarce-tamed creatures, give great life and interest to the scene. On the other side of a lake, on the left of the road, Dean Mahon owns a handsome house. It is very agreeably situated, with a good deal of wood about it; and would be a delightful retreat for a man of a contemplative mind, and fond of occasional solitude.

This line of road is in a shameful condition: it is impassable to any vehicle, unless with the assistance of half-a-dozen men, to carry it, or at least to assist its progress, over the unfinished parts of the road. When I say vehicle, I mean an Irish jaunting-car of the strongest build. For any

other more ambitious carriage, the road is impassable with any assistance. To complete this road, would not cost 300*l.*; and yet the gentlemen of Galway allow it to remain in its present condition, while ten times 300*l.*, perhaps, is swallowed up in jobs.

I passed through a considerable tract of country here, without any inhabitants, or any cultivation; but houses began to appear, as I approached Ballinahinch. I spent an hour or two in this neighbourhood, sitting with, and talking with, and *tasting* with, the small landholders. I found them generally in a situation of comparative comfort; I do not mean, that they actually lived comfortably; but that there was nothing in the circumstances in which they were placed, to prevent the enjoyment of comfort. All had one, two, or more cows; all had turf for nothing: and all had the privilege of fishing during a certain season. These are great advantages, unknown to the small farmer of the flat and fertile districts. I must not omit to say, that every one had his little patch of barley, for the manufacture of potheen: and he made no secret of it.

I now came in sight of Ballinahinch, which is not the kind of place one would expect to find as the residence of an individual who is the king of these districts, and through whose dominions one has been travelling during the greater part of thirty miles. The situation of the house is good: it stands upon the well-wooded bank of a long narrow lake; and is backed by a magnificent range of dark and lofty mountains; but the edifice itself has nothing baronial about it: its look is quite modern; and it is rather diminutive. Over all his own country, however, Mr. Martin is quite a sovereign. An individual, speaking to me of the family, said, that Colonel Martin, that is—*the* Martin—was the best Martin that ever "*reigned*." Mr. Martin was in London when I was in this neighbourhood.

I did not proceed to Clifden by the straight road from Ballinahinch; but, soon after, turned to the right, on the road that leads to Roundstone,—the village, situated on Birterbuy

bay, founded by that late highly gifted individual, Mr. Nimmo, whose extensive knowledge of Ireland, and her capabilities and wants, is on record; and may serve as a guide to all who would devise means for benefiting the people.

The road by which I journeyed to Roundstone conducted me through a wild and not very picturesque country. I passed, on the way side, a very solitary chapel and burying-ground,—the few tombs, marked by rough upright stones, or small wooden crosses; a few crooked stunted trees grew here and there; a little rivulet skirted the place of graves, and murmured pleasantly by; and when I passed, two old men were employed in leisurely digging a grave.

Soon after passing this spot, I came within sight of Roundstone, and skirted several narrow arms of the sea. On the shores of all these bays, smoke was rising from numerous spots where the people were burning sea-weed for kelp. Roundstone cuts no great figure in approaching it: but the country on both sides of the road, offers sufficient interest. Most encouraging proofs are every where to be seen, of the capabilities of the bogs of Cunnemara. On the same land, I saw heaps of turf newly cut out of the bog; and close by, the finest crops of oats, potatoes, barley, and even wheat. There is no crop that cannot be produced by the aid of either limestone, or of other natural products of this neighbourhood,—coral sand, and sea-weed. These have an advantage over limestone, inasmuch as they need no quarrying or preparation. First-rate crops are here produced the third year. Potatoes are generally taken for the two first crops; and these, by the operation of trenching, drain the land. Oats then follow; and extraordinary crops are produced; sixteen barrels, 207 stone to the barrel, is not reckoned an uncommon product of an acre.

There is, perhaps, no part of Ireland so well adapted for experimenting on waste lands, and reclaimable bogs, as Cunnemara. No part of Cunnemara is more than six miles from some sea bay, or lake having a communication with the sea. If there were good roads in all directions, this length of land

carriage would not be great : but even this distance would be much diminished, by improving and connecting the navigation of the chains of lakes which extend through every part of Cunnemara. One part of that chain drains into Loch Corrib, and through it to the bay of Galway : the other part drains into the western bays. One has but to glance at the map, to see how much nature has done for Cunnemara ; and in enumerating the advantages offered in this district for the cultivation of its wastes, the easy acquisition of the means of cultivation,—sand and sea-weed,—must always be kept prominently in view.

Roundstone is a straggling village, situated on the west side of Roundstone bay, which is a part of Birterbuy bay. The village is little more than seven years old, and, for its age, has an aspect of tolerable prosperity. There are about thirty-five houses in the village, and eight or ten building. The exports from Roundstone are oats, turf, and sea-weed, for Galway, and the ports of Clare. The export of grain, however, I suspect, is as yet but trifling. Cunnemara is supposed at present to produce about 1500 tons of oats ; but a large portion of this quantity is made into whiskey ; and besides, Roundstone is not the only port of Cunnemara. Many intelligent persons are of opinion that the site of Roundstone was ill chosen ; and that it will never rise to any great prosperity.

The embarrassed condition of some of the land-owners of this part of Ireland has produced, along with much evil, one good result. It is the custom, in very many parts of Ireland, to allow one half year's rent to be constantly in arrear, *i. e.* the first half year's is not called for till the end of the year ; and the second half year's rent, not till the expiration of eighteen months. By this system, all tenants are in the power of the landlord ; and the state of affairs in Cunnemara, which has, on some estates, compelled these arrears to be paid up, has, in my opinion, acted most favourably upon the future condition of the tenant, by making him a more independent man, and by placing him less within the reach of a

capricious or embarrassed landlord. It would be well, if tenants throughout Ireland could be persuaded to wave this fancied advantage, which has now grown almost into a privilege.

Behind Roundstone rises the mountain called Urrisbeg, which I ascended the evening after my arrival in Roundstone. There is a mountain-path, about half way up; and the remainder of the ascent is through heathy slopes, and over rocks, with scarcely any bog-land intervening. Cunnemara is remarkable for the variety of flowers and plants which grow wild upon its mountains. I gathered on Urrisbeg many very beautiful, and some of them rare, wild flowers; amongst others, the Irish heath, or bell-heather; the beautifully pink-streaked water pimpernel; the eye-bright, with its little yellow eye; the bright-tinted tormentilla; gentiana; the red bear berry; London pride, though not then in flower; innumerable heaths, —amongst others, the erica limerea, adianthum, capillus Veneris, or maiden hair; the bilberry; dwarf juniper; the silver leaf, &c. The Mediterranean heath (*erica Mediterranea*) is also found on these mountains; as well as the *Menziesia polifolia*.

The view from the summit of Urrisbeg is more singular than beautiful. Here, Cunnemara is perceived to be truly that which its name denotes—"bays of the sea." The whole western coast of Cunnemara is laid open with its innumerable bays and inlets: but the most striking and singular part of the view is that to the north, over the districts called Urrisbeg and Urrismore. These are wide level districts, spotted by an almost uncountable number of lakes: and mostly entirely uncultivated and uninhabited. I endeavoured, from my elevated position, to reckon the number of lakes; and succeeded in counting upwards of a hundred and sixty. Shoulders of the mountain, however, shut out from the view some of the nearer parts of the plains; and other parts were too distant to allow any very accurate observation; so that I have no doubt there may be three hundred lakes, great and small, in this wild and very singular district. Several of the

lakes have islands upon them; and by the aid of a good telescope, which I carried with me, I perceived that many of these islands were wooded. A tract of this country, six miles in diameter, is at present let for 6*l.* 4*s.*

It has been a common saying, by way of expressing the barbarous condition of this part of Ireland, that the king's writ never went over Cunnemara: and I believe that where there has been any inclination to dispute the progress of the king's writ, the saying is a true one. Some curious stories are current upon this subject; but I do not feel myself justified in repeating them. It is certain that no *suspicious* stranger can proceed far into Cunnemara, without intelligence of his arrival being conveyed to the remotest part of it. I was informed—I do not vouch for the truth of the story—that when it was necessary to publish the Act authorising the holding of markets at Roundstone, and when the sheriff came down on this business, he was made drunk by those who accompanied him, at Ouchterard; and by way of security, all papers, excepting those relating to the business upon which he was sent, were taken out of his pocket, sealed up, and left behind.

CHAPTER XX.

CUNNEMARA.

Country between Roundstone and Clifden—Clifden—Cunnemara Salmon—Advice to Travellers—Trade of Clifden—Clifden Castle—Cultivation of Bogs—Landowners of Cunnemara—Road to Leenane—Morning Pictures—Digression on Irish Hospitality—Character of this part of Cunnemara—Landholders—The Killeries—Magnificent Scenery—Delphi—Leenane, and *Jack Joyce*—A Hint to Travellers.

I now left Roundstone for Clifden, which lies about ten miles to the north-west. The road to Clifden skirts that singular country of lakes which I saw from the summit of Urrisbeg mountain, and gives the traveller the opportunity of a nearer observation of it. It is an entirely unpeopled, and most desolate-looking tract: ranging the eye over the whole extent of it, not a habitation is to be seen, nor a living creature of any kind—nothing but a vast flat of brown heathy land, with innumerable lakes of all dimensions and forms gleaming in every direction. Some of these lakes lay close to the road; many of them, as my telescope had already shown me, encircled wooded islands; and I was near enough to see, that a considerable portion of the wood was yew.

As I approached Clifden, the country began to improve: a few cottages skirted the road, and some little cultivation surrounded the cottages; and close upon Clifden the scenery becomes agreeable and picturesque. Nothing, indeed, can be prettier than the situation of Clifden, at the head of the

deep narrow inlet of the sea, above which it stands, and with a splendid amphitheatre of mountains half surrounding it.

Clifden is only fourteen years old, and is a wonderful place for its age. Fifteen years ago not a house was built: now it reckons upwards of a hundred good slated, and perhaps half as many thatched, houses. Nor is it a mere straggling congregation of houses; there are three streets—two of them good streets—and many respectable-looking shops. There is also a church, a chapel, a fever hospital; a school-house—not yet completed, intended to be under the new board,—and another unfinished school-house, which was begun when proselytism was in vogue. There is also a wonderfully good inn, for so remote a place, where, notwithstanding the claims of the Blackwater, I think I may promise the traveller as prime a salmon as ever swam.

Cunnemara is the country of salmon: every inlet and river is full of them; and this is the staple of every dinner in every inn in this part of Ireland. Variety in the mode of preparing the salmon, stands instead of other variety. Salmon boiled, salmon roasted, and salmon pickled, are produced successively, in place of fish, flesh, and fowl: but I would take the liberty of advising the hungry traveller to be cautious. Salmon at no time, and in no shape, is considered a very wholesome food; but it is the opinion of persons wiser in these matters than I am, that salmon, eaten perfectly fresh out of the water, as it is always eaten in the west of Ireland, is much more indigestible than when it has been some time kept. There is nothing, I believe, unphilosophical in this opinion. I have eaten salmon in Cunnemara, an hour or two out of the water, which has required as vigorous an exercise of the masticating powers as old poultry, or new-killed mutton. And as I am on the subject of inns, and bills of fare, I would advise the traveller in Cunnemara, after he has partaken moderately of the never-failing salmon, to make bacon the staple of his dinner. Fowls, over the greater part of Ireland, are uneatable; but the bacon is generally good; and with eggs, and excellent potatoes,—the first course of them boiled, the second crisped,—

and with good bread, and excellent butter, a traveller may get through the agreeable business of dining as comfortably as a traveller in Cunnemara has any right to expect. I must add that the abundance and cheapness of salmon, which is generally about threepence per lb., make little difference in the charges at the inns. Considering the fare, I think charges higher here than in most parts of Ireland. The whole dinner of salmon, bacon, and potatoes, cannot cost the innkeeper sixpence; and the traveller is probably charged 1s. 6d., 1s. 8d., or 2s.: and in Limerick, or any other town, he is charged 2s. 6d. or 3s. for a good dinner. The great inns, with their high rents, and other expenses, are decidedly moderate in their charges. But to return from this digression.

Clifden has a considerable export trade in oats, and a rapidly increasing trade. It was thought, that the export of oats, for the year 1834, would reach a thousand tons. I noticed one large corn-store newly built, and another in course of building. There is also some export of kelp from Clifden; but it is now very trifling. There can be no doubt that the decline of the kelp trade has been of service to Cunnemara, by encouraging the employment of sea-weed in agriculture, which would certainly not have been the case, if there had been a market for it. Clifden also enjoys a pretty good retail trade, considering the yet limited extent of the town, and the scanty population of the surrounding district. I saw no shop unoccupied; and I was told, that many of the tradespeople are in comfortable circumstances.

Mr. D'Arcy, of Clifden Castle, has the merit of having founded this town, and of having made it what it is: and yet it has never cost him a shilling. He pointed out the advantages which would accrue to this remote neighbourhood from having a town, and a sea-port so situated; and he offered leases for ever of a plot of ground for building, together with four acres of mountain land, at but a short distance from the proposed site of the town, at 25s. per annum. This offer was most advantageous, even leaving out of account the

benefit which would necessarily be conferred by a town on a district where the common necessities of life had to be purchased thirty miles distant; and where there was no market, and no means of export for agricultural produce: and so the town of Clifden was founded, and grew.

It says little, however, for the industry of the people, that the greater part of the mountain land so granted, and so cheaply held, yet remains in its primitive state; though it is perfectly susceptible of cultivation, at but small cost of either money or labour. When mountain land is spoken of, this does not mean very elevated ground, but it applies to any land not brought under cultivation. Nowhere is the facility of improving certain descriptions of bog-land more plainly seen than in this neighbourhood. Grass, potatoes, oats, and rye, are all seen growing luxuriantly on land that a very few years ago was used only for turf-cutting. The usual practice is to spread sea-weed on bog-land, and at the same time to put in potatoes, and trench the land; and the first year's crop even leaves a profit over the expense of leading the manure, and of labour. Roads and ports are alone wanted to convert Cunnemara, at no distant period, into a fruitful corn district.

Clifden does not afford constant employment for all who desire it. A new place is apt to attract a superabundance of labour for a time; and this has been in some degree the case with Clifden.

The marble quarries of Cunnemara afford but little employment. Indeed, they can scarcely be said to be worked at all. Owing to the peculiarities of the marble, and the danger of destroying it in the operation of sawing, it does not find a ready market in England; but it is probable, that the establishment of a saw-mill at Clifden, and the export of slabs, would be a remunerating investment of capital.

Let no traveller be in this neighbourhood, without visiting Clifden Castle, the delightful residence of Mr. D'Arcy. The walk from Clifden, by the water side, is perfectly lovely; and the distance is not greater than two miles. The path

runs close by the brink of a narrow inlet of the sea, the banks of which, on both sides, are rugged and precipitous. It was an evening of extraordinary beauty when I sauntered down this path; the tide was full, and the inlet brimful and calm; and beyond the narrow entrance of the bay lay, in almost as glassy a calm, though with a gentle heaving, the wide waters of the Atlantic. After reaching the entrance of the bay, and rounding a little promontory, Clifden Castle comes into view. It is a modern castellated house; not remarkable in itself; but in point of situation unrivalled. Mountain and wood rose behind: and a fine sloping lawn in front reaches down to the beautiful land-locked bay; while to the right, the eye ranges over the ocean, until it mingles with the far and dim horizon.

Twenty years ago, the whole of this was a bog; and now not a rood of bog-land is to be seen. The lawn I saw laden with a magnificent crop of hay; while at the same time, the sunk-fence showed a deep bog. I returned to Clifden by the mountain road, and was again delighted with the new views which the road discloses,—more Swiss in character than anything I had seen in Ireland. The mountain range behind Clifden—the Twelve Pins of Bunarola—is almost worthy of Switzerland. In its outline, nothing can be finer. Altogether, I was greatly pleased with Clifden: and I think I may safely risk a prophecy, that this town will rapidly rise into importance. Should Cunnemara ever be generally brought into cultivation, which I confidently anticipate, it is from this neighbourhood that the produce of the western part of Cunnemara must be exported.

Cunnemara is almost all shared amongst large proprietors; the five greatest of whom are, Mr. Martin, Mr. D'Arcy, Mr. Blake, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. O'Neill. The estates of all these individuals are extensive: but Mr. Martin is greatly the largest proprietor, and has considerably the largest rent-roll. I found nothing in the neighbourhood of Clifden, to weaken the impression on my mind, that the landholders of these

mountain districts are better circumstanced than the same class of individuals in the fertile and more peopled parts of Ireland.

My route now lay from Clifden to Leenane, or as it is more currently called, "Jack Joyce's." This road, after skirting the western base of the Twelve Pins, on the one side, and the sea bays on the other, strikes through the heart of Cunnemara, and amongst the mountains, into Joyce's country—for Leenane is not in Cunnemara, but in Joyce's country. As I intended, at Leenane, again to have recourse to cars (for there, one gets into the carriage-road to Westport), and as no cars were to be had at Leenane, I hired a car at Clifden to precede me.

I do not hesitate for a moment to say, that the scenery in passing from Clifden to the Killeries and Leenane is the finest in Ireland. In boldness of character, nothing at Killarney comes at all near to it; and although the deficiency of wood excludes the possibility of a competition with Killarney in picturesque beauty, I am certainly of opinion, that the scenery of this part of Cunnemara, including especially the Killeries, which is in Joyce's country, is entitled to rank higher than the most praised, because better known, scenery of Killarney. I would not be understood as saying one word in disparagement of Killarney, which, in the combination of form and colour, is not to be surpassed: but in speaking of Killarney, I think I ventured to observe, that no approach to sublimity was to be found; and as, in the part of Ireland of which I am now speaking, there are undoubted approaches to the sublime, with all of the picturesque besides that depends upon form, I think these ought to weigh heavier in the balance than that softened beauty, which at Killarney is created by abundance and variety of wood, and consequent splendour of colouring. I know that a far stronger impression was made on my mind in this Journey, than by anything I saw at Killarney. Be it known too, that this is a country of lakes,—lakes, with as fine mountain boundaries, as are to be found in

the three kingdoms. But it is time I should proceed on my journey.

The first six or seven miles after leaving Clifden, the road lies through a peopled country, though not thickly peopled. The scenery is of the most varied and attractive character : one has glimpses of a hundred beautiful and striking scenes on land and sea,—climbing up high steeps, and then descending into deep valleys ; skirting and rounding deep inlets of the sea ; and still, calm, fresh-water lakes ; and now and then catching peeps into the long solitary valleys, and deep hollows, that lie in the heart of the mountains. I left Clifden soon after five o'clock ; and a calmer or more delightful morning never brightened before the traveller. Morning has this advantage over evening,—that when the calm of evening comes on, and shadows lengthen, and sunbeams grow brighter, the sounds of day continue : nay, evening is the time for play and frolic ; and the silence of evening is more poetical than real. But at early sunrise, the repose of night is yet upon the earth ; and the calm of the early morning is more perfect and unbroken than that of evening : the lake is still ; but there is no pleasure party, with laugh and jest, making for the shore : the sea breaks as gently on the beach ; but no idlers are sauntering, or children playing there. The mountain sides are as bright, and their hollows as dim ; but the cattle have not yet raised their heads, and are moveless as the rocks above them. Morning, therefore, is the hour of greater repose ; and on the morning I left Clifden, all was as I have sketched it.

About seven miles from Clifden, the road to Leenane and the Killery—a new line of road, though not yet completed—turns to the right, leaving on the left the road to that extreme western point where the property of Mr. Blake lies. The family of Mr. Blake are authors of that agreeable book, called “ Letters from the Irish Highlands ;” and I regretted that my letter of introduction to the family did not reach me before my departure from England, but found me at Belfast on my return. Although I well know that Irish hospitality

makes a traveller and a stranger welcome, I make it a rule, to present myself to no one of a certain rank without a letter of introduction. And here I will take the opportunity of making a short digression on Irish hospitality. I am of opinion, that Irish hospitality, in the sense in which it was once understood, does not now exist to any great extent. It was an evil; and cured itself. Wholesale hospitality, and prodigality, are near akin; and the gentry of Ireland are not now generally in a condition, in which prudence would sanction that kind of hospitality.

The attentions and hospitality of good society in Ireland are to be found in Ireland, as they are in other countries,—through the medium of good letters of introduction. These, I believe, will secure civilities in England and Scotland, as well as in Ireland; and will produce their fruits, according to the source whence they come; and I do not believe, that, without these, great progress is made in Ireland, more than in other parts of the empire. There is, indeed, a warm-heartedness about the Irish in the south and west, that if a person well introduced be an agreeable person, will exhibit itself in extraordinary attentions: still, I must contend, that in Ireland the hospitalities of the upper classes must be preceded, as they ought to be, by creditable introductions. No doubt, an Irish gentleman in a remote part, where there is no public accommodation, would receive and welcome a traveller; but so any gentleman would, in any remote part of the empire; and I have been myself occasionally so received, in almost every country in Europe. Those, of the many to whose hospitality in Ireland I have been indebted, who may chance to read these pages, well know, that I have every reason to speak highly of Irish hospitality; and so I do: I only wish to correct an impression, that Irish hospitality is everywhere a passport to the stranger; and to say that, although Irish hospitality would forbid the door to be closed against a stranger, yet those attentions which render the journey of a traveller agreeable

are due, in the first place, to the introductions which he carries with him.

I left the reader at the point where the road to Leenane turns to the right. For many miles I travelled through a succession of most striking scenery, by the margin of lakes lying in the very heart of the mountains, which are in many places precipitous,—everywhere of the most picturesque forms ; here and there lofty enough, and rugged enough, to verge upon sublimity ;—and which never degenerate into tameness of outline, or insignificance in elevation. The scenes were generally of a solitary character ; for few cattle or sheep were on the mountain sides ; the curlew and the plover only were on the margin of the lakes ; and the *bouquet* of heaths was reserved for the wild bee.

After travelling seven or eight miles on this interesting road, I reached one or two houses ; and took advantage of the opportunity to make a halt. The interior of the house was poor enough, and deficient in almost every article of comfort. I counted eleven cows, however, outside of the house ; with many pigs, and all kinds of fowl ; and several sides of bacon were hanging from the roof. This, I had very rarely seen in Ireland : and it certainly bespoke a very favourable condition. Nor were the cows all the stock these people possessed ; they fed a considerable herd of cattle on the mountain ; but I could not learn how many : and for the land which supported all this stock, they paid 3*l.* 7*s.* Yet these people complained of the high rent, and of their poverty. I think I cannot be accused of a disposition to make the condition of the Irish poor appear better than it is, or to extol the generosity of landlords. God knows the condition of the Irish poor is bad enough ; and it is but little they owe, in general, to the owners of the soil ; but I wish to represent the truth, and do justice to all. There is a disposition among the Irish farmers to complain under all circumstances ; and although in the great majority of cases they may justly complain of high rents, I never heard one individual admit that his rent was low. I would not always judge of the

condition of an Irish farmer solely by the way in which he lives; because some live like paupers, who might live in greater comfort; but if I see sides of bacon hanging in the kitchen, and four or five children drinking new milk, and eating potatoes and butter, I may conclude that it is not necessary to send either the pigs or the butter to market, in order to pay the rent. I sincerely wish that all the farmers in Ireland could afford to do the like. I noticed several acres in the neighbourhood of the cabin at which I stopped under tillage; and I drank some excellent potheen from the family still.

After quitting this halting place, the road diverged from the range of mountains through which I had been passing; but in leaving them, their forms, and outline, and glens, and shadows, were only the better revealed; and before me another, and seemingly equally elevated, mountain range extended to the right. These were the mountains which border the Killeries, and which lie in Joyce's country, part of which, as well as Cunnemara, is in Galway, and part in the county Mayo. I had already indeed been some time in Joyce's country. The limits between Cunnemara and Joyce's country are not, I believe, very distinctly marked: but at the house where I lately made a halt, I was told I was then in Joyce's country.

After passing through a somewhat more open country, I suddenly dropped down upon the Killery. The Killery is a narrow deep inlet of the sea, reaching far up into the country, and bounded on both sides, and throughout its whole extent, by a range of mountains nearly as elevated, and of as picturesque forms, as any in Ireland. It may easily be conceived how great the attractions of this scene must be. It is of an entirely novel character; and resembles more the scenery of a Norwegian *Fiord*, than any thing I know nearer home. The inlet is not above an English mile across; several parts of the mountain boundary rise abruptly from the water; but there are here and there clefts and hollows, which discover more elevated peaks beyond,

and show the breadth and extent of the range. There is no scene in England of the same character as the Killery; nor another in Ireland either, on so grand a scale. If the mountain sides on the Killery were wooded, it must be almost unnecessary to travel into Norway in search of scenery.

I knew that on the opposite side of the Killery, in Mayo, the Marquis of Sligo owned a spot, called Delphi, which enjoyed a high reputation for beauty of situation; and seeing, as I walked along the road which skirts the water, a little boat just putting off, at but a short distance from me, I hailed it, and bargained to be taken across, to the point nearest to Lord Sligo's lodge; and that the boat should wait my return, and then take me up to the head of the Killery, where stands the house of reception owned by *Jack Joyce*. This was precisely one of those occasions when a man may congratulate himself on being free from all incumbrances. To be rowed across the Killery, and then carried up to the Killery head, in this convenient mode, required that one should have neither horse nor vehicle of any kind.

A short half hour was sufficient to put me across; and stepping ashore, in a little cove, opposite to a wide mountain hollow, I followed the path which was pointed out to me. About a mile from the shore, I reached the entrance to the mountain hollow; and another mile, into the heart of it, brought me to the neighbourhood of Delphi. The lodge itself is not any way remarkable; but its situation is. It lies in a deep recess among the mountains, which rise lofty and abrupt on all sides, excepting one, where there is a little lake, along whose margin winds the road to the house. The immediate neighbourhood of the house is well wooded, and abundance of sweet-smelling flowers make an odorous atmosphere around. It is certainly a tranquil and singular spot—an Elysium to many; but not likely, I should think, to suit well the taste and habits of the noble owner. There is a road from this side of the Killery to Westport; and, judging by the appearance of the mountains beyond, I should think it must be an

interesting one. Expecting a car, however, to be in waiting for me at Leenane, I was true to my bargain with the boatmen, who had taken advantage of my hour-and-a-half's absence to spread their nets and ensnare a fine salmon, and were making towards the shore when I reached it. It was a delightful hour—that which was occupied in rowing up the Killery. It is from the water only that scenery of this kind is seen in perfection. A blue sky—a perfect calm—mild air—and magnificent scenery—united in furnishing forth a banquet of enjoyment; and I reached the house of *Jack Joyce*, fully disposed to be pleased with whatever the helpmate of this renowned person should set before me.

This is one of the most noted spots in these wilds; and the owner one of the most noted persons. The Joyces, I have already said, are a large race; but Jack Joyce is huge, even among *them*. He is as near akin to a giant as a man can well be, without being every bit a giant. In breadth height, muscle, and general aspect, he is like a man—if not of another race—the descendant of another race. Jack Joyce looks upon himself as the greatest man for many a mile round; as a sort of king of that country—Joyce's country—as indeed he is. King Dan is a very inferior person to him there. But, beware reader! and address this individual in some phraseology more respectful than by the name he commonly bears. The salutation "How are you Jack?" or "Jack Joyte, my fine fellow how do you do?" might be followed by an uncourteous reception. "Mr. Joyce, I am delighted to make the acquaintance of the representative of all the Joyces;" or, "Have I the pleasure of seeing before me Mr. Joyce, to whose ancestors this country once belonged?" would be salutations more likely to ensure a good reception. And, besides, Jack Joyce is really worth conversing with: he is a shrewd, intelligent, plain-spoken man; but not, of course, inclined to favour with his conversation those who do not pay him the respect to which he thinks himself entitled. For my part, I could not have addressed a king

of one of the South-sea islands with more respect; and I found my advantage in it: the head of the Joyces was most courteous and communicative; and the mistress of the house, perceiving the favourable reception of the guest, strove to do her part. Here, however, the will was better than the deed. I was still in the heart of the salmon country. No place indeed is more famous for salmon than this same spot; and accordingly, salmon, in all its varieties, was set before me—as much of it as would have dined a score persons of ordinary dimensions and appetite, with a pyramid of potatoes in the middle, in perfect keeping with the enormous dishes by which it was flanked. Room was also found on the table for a double-sized bottle of whiskey; water appeared to be a beverage not much in repute there.

I purposed going forward to Westport that evening, and, indeed, actually set out; but I changed my mind. It would have been dark before I could have reached Westport; and I do not approve of passing through a strange country in the dark. Do not suppose I mean to question the security of travelling in these parts. I mean only to question the propriety of passing, in the dark, through a country which one wishes to see. The traveller need be under no apprehension in any part of Ireland. Irish outrages are never committed upon strangers; and however strong the disposition may be, among the peasantry of Ireland, to oppose the law, and screen delinquents, I do not believe an outrage, committed on a stranger and a traveller, would receive anything but condemnation from all classes.

A two or three hours' ramble among the mountains spent the evening much to my mind. It was as splendid an evening as it had been a day. Every mountain top was clear; and from some neighbouring heights, all the Mayo mountains were placed in magnificent amphitheatre before me,—the celebrated "Reek" in the midst of them, raising its cone, sharp and clear, above them all. An hour's chat with *the* Joyce, and the accompaniment of a glass of whiskey and

water, finished the day; and notwithstanding that the wayfarer's bedroom in the house of *Jack Joyce* had not much to boast of over the accommodation of Mr. Flynn, at the half-way house, fatigue kindly rendered me insensible to all annoyances.

CHAPTER XXI.

Journey to Westport—Westport—The Hotel—the Linen Trade of Westport—Land and Rents in this District—Exports of Westport—Market Day—Proofs of Poverty—Ridiculous Pride of the People of Mayo—Lord Sligo—Landlords and their Tenants—Priests and Agitators—Lord Sligo's Domain—The Petty Sessions at Westport—The "Reek"—Achill Island, and the Mullet—Road to Castlebar—Cabins and their Inmates—Going to Harvest—Castlebar and its Trade—The late Reduction of Duty on Irish Spirits, and its probable Effects.

AT an early hour I left Leenane, for Westport. I had now dropped pedestrianism, and travelled by a car, along a smooth and somewhat hilly road, with an exceedingly pleasant country on either side. It was still a mountain country; but cultivation was beginning to be seen here and there; patches of corn, and of potatoes, were scattered along the edges of the bogs; and the whole district showed symptoms of a dawning improvement, needing but enterprise, the security of capital, and good inland communications, in order to mature it. All the way to Westport, the mountain ranges are seen to great advantage; the "Reek," or "Crow Patrick," still conspicuous among them all.

I had intended to have reached Westport to a late breakfast; but hunger assailed me by the way; and as it was necessary to bait the horse, I took advantage of the halt, to

get some oat cake, milk, and eggs, in a neighbouring house. It was not an inn: but I was made welcome. The inmates, who held their land under Lord Sligo, were small farmers, possessing as much land (in the lump, as they call it) as fed forty head of cattle, five cows, and a few horses; and the rent was thirty shillings. The lease, however, was an old one. I make this remark, because the low rent I have mentioned might otherwise lead to the supposition, that the Marquis of Sligo's land is remarkably low let, which is not generally the case. The people with whom I breakfasted were as comfortable as the ideas and habits of the people permit any small land occupier in Ireland to be. They consumed their own milk and butter, and raised enough of corn to pay the rent, and to afford oaten bread and potheen besides.

As I approached Westport, the country greatly improved in cultivation. More cattle, too, were seen on the hill sides; wood began to assume a respectable growth; and the cottages became frequent. Some time before reaching the town, the fine bay, with its many islands, were seen on the left,—the majestic “Reek” rising directly from its shore; and after a very agreeable drive of four hours, I was set down at the door of Robinson's Hotel,—the very best hotel in Ireland, without excepting even “the Imperial” of Cork. It is singular that such an hotel should be found in a town in the extreme west of the remote county of Mayo. I cannot account for this; I only know the fact; and can assure the reader, that he will not find at Gresham's in Dublin,—scarcely even in the Clarendon, a more *recherché* dinner than Mrs. Robinson will put before him. It is true, indeed, he will pay something more for his dinner, as well as for his bed-room, than in more ordinary places; but for my part, I was well content to do this, after a fortnight's Lent, and Jack Joyce's bed-room.

Westport is rather a nice-looking town. It boasts of more than one good street: and in the middle of the town there is a mall, with a pretty stream running in the centre of it, and with rows of fine trees on either side. The gate opening

into Lord Sligo's park is at one end of the mall; and the houses which line both sides are respectable. The hotel occupies a large portion on one side.

Westport was once a very flourishing town. The linen trade was extensively carried on there; and eight years ago, as many as nine hundred pieces were measured and sold on a market day. Now the quantity scarcely averages one hundred pieces. Taking the whole district, including Westport, Castlebar, Newport Pratt, and Balinrobe, and the intermediate country, about five hundred pieces are sold weekly; and about 30,000 persons are supposed to be, less or more, employed in the trade. No trade gives such universal employment as this: not fewer than sixty persons are employed, from first to last, in preparing a web of linen.

The linen trade in this district, and most probably in other districts, is the source of all the extras which are obtained beyond the absolute necessities of life. The land is let in very small portions; seven or eight acres is about the usual size of a "take." Potatoes are raised for the family consumption; grain, to pay the rent; and the flax is destined for clothing and extras. The decline of the linen trade has produced great want of employment; and the condition of the agriculturists throughout these districts has very much deteriorated. Many much smaller landholders than those I have mentioned were attracted by the linen trade; and now, therefore, the want of employment is the more felt. A man with three children could formerly earn 10s. a week with ease. Land is generally sufficiently high let in this neighbourhood, except the old takes, which are low. I found a man occupying three acres in the immediate neighbourhood of the town, and paying only 4*l.* for the whole. He told me he had married five daughters, and had given four cows to each, as a marriage portion. The poverty of the county of Mayo is chiefly found in the lower parts of it: not so much in the mountainous districts. In these the people are circumstanced much the same as in Cunnemara.

Westport possesses a considerable export trade in grain.

About 15,000 tons are exported,—of which the largest portion is oats ; the next barley : and the smallest portion, wheat. There are extensive corn stores on the quay : and the harbour is good and secure.

The day after my arrival in Westport chanced to be market day. The town had an appearance of considerable business : but, with the exception of manufactured linen, this appearance was deceptive. It is true, there were many people in the market, and much buying and selling ; but the articles brought to market were, in most cases, of very trifling value. I saw hundreds of women, standing with but a couple of hanks of linen yarn, worth a shilling or two ; hundreds, with an apron full of wool, worth much less. Some of these bundles of wool, indeed, were the shearings of one or two sheep, the exclusive property of the farmer's wife or daughter, and were sent to be converted into ribands or gloves ; but notwithstanding these exceptions, it is certain that there is much evidence of the poverty of the surrounding country, in the small value of the articles brought to market, and in the great distance which they are carried. I know of three, two, and even *one* egg, being brought to Westport from a distance of two miles. I saw a girl take her seat in the market with five eggs, worth one penny halfpenny ; and she had walked an Irish mile and a half to bring them to market.

It is a singular fact, however, that along with this poverty, and this necessity, the most absurd pride should prevail among the country people. They have an objection to bring to market, or offer for sale, anything which might be supposed to be consumed at home. One does not see in a West of Ireland market the wholesome spectacle of a row of farmers' wives and daughters, with their baskets of butter, and their hens and ducks cackling at their feet. The Irish landholder's wife is above this. If necessity compels her, as it generally does, to dispose of her poultry, she does it by stealth, and offers them as if they were not fairly come by. They carry the chickens under their cloaks, and generally get within the door before uncovering their goods. I have myself heard a

woman, who offered two chickens for sale, open the negotiation by assigning some particular reason for the step. This ridiculous pride I have found in other parts of Ireland; but nowhere to so great an extent as in the county of Mayo.

The absence of Lord Sligo from Westport cannot be otherwise than a serious loss; and of this the inhabitants are fully sensible. I heard nothing to Lord Sligo's prejudice, excepting, that like many other Irish noblemen and gentlemen, he was disgusted with what he considered the ingratitude of the people of Westport and its neighbourhood; and had withdrawn his countenance and favour from the town and its inhabitants, long before he left the country for Jamaica. In this course, he, and all others who have so acted, were wrong. Supposing it to be ingratitude to oust any noble family from the political position it has held in a county (and this is only supposition, since it depends altogether upon the character and conduct of the family), the ignorant, and the misguided, are punished by the landlord, for being ignorant and misguided,—which is evidently unjust. Good and bad men have alike been driven from the representation of counties and boroughs in Ireland, by agitation: but in all cases in which the people were wrong, as well as in those where they were right, they were originally mere tools in the hands of the resident working agitators,—the priests,—who were themselves tools in the hands of the absentee master agitator. Some change has now taken place in this. O'Connell does not work now so much through the medium of the priests as directly upon the people, by epistles and speeches; and my persuasion is, that the fiats of O'Connell would be obeyed, even if the priesthood opposed them. I believe it frequently happens now, and will happen still more frequently, that it is the priest who, through self-interest, finds it necessary to move with the people,—not the people who are incited to agitation by the priest. This, I know to be the opinion of several of the more respectable Catholic dignitaries, who are opposed to O'Connell and agitation.

The domain of Lord Sligo, at Westport, is small, but won-

derfully beautiful; partly by the gifts of nature, but more by the operations of art. The house stands charmingly, at the head of a little artificial lake, which is separated by an embankment from the sea, that at high water rises almost to a level with the lake. The view from the windows of the house is beautiful. Abundance of fine timber is scattered over the domain, particularly ash; and the disposition of the wood is worthy of its great variety and fine growth.

I attended a petty sessions at Westport; and found a good deal to interest me. The classes of cases were the same as I had already seen elsewhere; but there was some little difference in the character of the assault cases, which were of a less barbarous kind than those which I had seen tried at the Tralee sessions. Here also were more cases of larceny, which had been very rare farther south. I found at Westport the same contempt of truth, the same disregard of an oath, the same clanship, as I had found elsewhere. Most of the cases tried originated in the competition for, or possession of, land. Many were cases of trespass; many, cases in which the driving of cattle to pound created contention and outrage; and some, cases of disputed possession of land and houses, which had also been the cause of outrage. The clerk of the sessions informed me, that the criminal business has greatly increased since the decline of the linen trade; and that it rarely happened, that those in full employment were implicated in any matter requiring magisterial interference. I saw less formality, and more of the free and easy, at the sessions here, than I had seen elsewhere. Every one took a part in what was going on. Lord Sligo's driver, who was sitting near, would say of a witness, "Don't believe it, your worship;" and a clerk, an interpreter, or even a reporter for a newspaper, would suggest a question; and the magistrates would interrogate accordingly.

Many spots in the neighbourhood of Westport are worthy of a visit: the road along the bay, and skirting the "Reek," which rises close to the water, is a very interesting road. I drove ten or twelve miles in this direction; and ascended

about a thousand feet up the Reek. It would have been useless to have ascended to the summit, for it was one of those hot and rather hazy days, when a very distant prospect is too indistinct to be attractive. From the more moderate elevation to which I ascended, I enjoyed a finer view. Newport bay, one of the most capacious on the Irish coast, with its hundreds of islands, lay spread out at my feet; and the opposite mountains of Coraan, and of Achill island, finely bounded the horizon. The ascent of the Reek is not difficult; and I have no doubt, that on a favourable day the view from the summit would abundantly repay the labour of it. Alas! there are many hundreds who ascend the Reek with a less rational object,—pilgrims, who flock there to perform their “stations,” and do penance, by laborious and painful modes of ascent. It was station-time when I was in this neighbourhood; and these deluded creatures might be seen in scores, fair weather and foul, passing along the road to the Reek, and ascending its sides.

I had at one time intended to have visited Achill island; but from information I received from those who knew it well, I concluded that a visit to it would not be productive of much advantage. I could easily gather, that life, among the people there, or in “the Mullet,” differs little, if at all, from life in the remote western parts of Galway, or Kerry, which I had already visited. How, indeed, should it be different, since their means of existence must be similar, and since civilization has made nearly equal progress throughout them all? I have no doubt, however, that to the traveller whose only object is scenery, and who does not weary of a repetition of the wild and lonely, that an excursion to these parts might possess some interest. To a sportsman, it is certain, that the attractions of Achill and the Mullet are many.

I now left Westport for Castlebar. I found the country lying between the two towns undulating and agreeable; partly under cultivation, but much of it waste. I passed on the left a pretty loch, several miles long, called Loch Dan, with cultivated banks, and adorned by more than one wooded

island. I also passed by many flourishing fields of flax, covered with its pretty pale blue flowers. The cottages by the way-side were all of the poorest description; and the small patches of cultivation round them, and the absence of grazing land, showed that these people might be classed among the poor of Mayo. I also noticed a good many cabins padlocked; and was told, that the owners had gone to harvesting, either in the Low Countries, or in England. We have certainly no proof of want of will among the Irish peasantry to work, in the thousands who travel every season from the remotest parts of Ireland, to earn a pound or two at laborious harvest work; and who carry back, sewed up in the sleeve of their ragged coat, or elsewhere, these hard and far-sought earnings, to pay the rent of their cabin, and bit of potato-land. Let but the violence of party be laid aside; or rather, let government, disregarding the violence of extreme party, steadily pursue a course of moderation, impartiality, consistency, and firmness; removing real grievances; improving the physical condition of the people, by devising means of employment; and acting on their intellect, by a rational education,—and agitators would speedily find agitation a losing trade.

I accosted many individuals, travelling from Mayo and elsewhere, to find harvest work; and always received the same answer to my interrogations. These men had no constant employment at home; and when employed, their wages were sixpence per day: and I was invariably told, that if they could find constant work in their own country, at tenpence, they would rather remain at home than travel to England, even to receive the still higher wages to be earned there. Every year the number of those who travel to England must diminish; for every year large portions of new ground are brought under tillage.

Castlebar is not so pretty a town as Westport; but it is a place of greater business; and it is a considerably larger and more populous town. There is only one good street in Castlebar; but the town contains many lanes; and has very

long, bad suburbs of mud cabins. The retail trade of Castlebar is necessarily good; for no town of considerable size lies to the north nearer than Ballina, and none to the east nearer than Boyle, a distance of at least forty miles. Castlebar possesses scarcely any direct export trade; but it enjoys a large share of the linen trade of the district,—at least three times more linen being sold in the market of Castlebar than in that of Westport. It must be understood, however, that the linen market of Castlebar includes Balinrobe, and its neighbourhood, where there is no market for the linen produced there.

I found great want of employment in Castlebar. There had recently been a considerable demand for labour on public works,—a new gaol, and new barracks, having been lately constructed: but these works were now completed; and the labour market was consequently more overstocked than before they began. This is invariably the case with every kind of employment which does not produce capital, or pave the way for investment. The construction of internal communications, and the cultivation of land, are the only kinds of employment from which improvement in condition must be certain and progressive. Castlebar and its neighbourhood are the property of Lord Lucan, who enjoys in Castlebar the reputation of being a tolerably fair landlord.

I chanced to be at Castlebar when the financial statement of ministers was received, and with it, intelligence of the reduction of duty on Irish spirits. This intelligence suggested the propriety of a few inquiries, by which I might form some opinion as to the policy of that measure, and some judgment as to its operation. The result of these inquiries was not favourable to the policy of the measure. I found that illicit whiskey could be purchased at one-half the price of legalized whiskey; so that in all probability the measure will be inefficacious. The temptation to distil potheen will still exist, notwithstanding the reduction of duty on legalized whiskey, because its price will still be greatly lower. In order to produce any decidedly good effect, it would be

necessary either to reduce the duty on legal whiskey to such an extent, that the trifling difference in price between the legal and the illicit spirit would be no compensation to the private distiller for his risk,—or else, greatly to increase the duty on spirits, and to make the lands answerable for illicit distillation. If one object of legislating on this subject be the improvement of morals, the former would be by far the preferable mode. Intoxication and intemperate habits are increased in a tenfold degree by illicit distillation. Not in towns only, but in every cabin throughout the country, the habit of drinking whiskey is acquired by the young: because almost every small landholder distils his own whiskey; and the still itself is a point of concentration for gossip, or worse—and drinking; a sort of mountain gin-shop, where there is no restraint from anticipation of a reckoning to pay. The diminution of only one shilling in the duty on spirit will still leave the distiller of potheen a temptation to distil; but if the duty were reduced still another shilling, the advantage of only one shilling in the price of potheen would not be compensation for the risk incurred. I could purchase at Castlebar as much potheen as I had a mind at 3s. 4d. the gallon.

CHAPTER XXII.

Journey to Ballina and Sligo—Loch Conn, and its peculiarities—Lord Lucan—Rent-free Possessions—Ballina, and its Situation and Trade—The surrounding Country—Rackrents and Driving—Detail of Profits—Road to Sligo—Pounds full of Cattle—Land-owners and Land-occupiers—Baliseclara—Sligo, and the beauty of its Environs—Streets, Houses, and Shops—Trade of Sligo—Public Institutions—Condition of the neighbouring Tenantry—Mr. Wynn—Lord Palmerston—Reply to an anticipated Charge—The People of Sligo—Improved Dress and Appearance—Strange Discrepancies—Prices of Provisions—Charming Views—Loch Gilley and Hazelwood—A day on Loch Gilley.

My route lay through Mayo, by Loch Conn, to Ballina. I found the first part of this road uninteresting. The country is poor and stony, and offers no object of interest, or subject for reflection. About seven miles from Castlebar, Loch Conn appears at a little distance; and, soon after, the road approaches, and skirts it, though not close to its banks. Loch Conn is a large sheet of water, not much less than fourteen miles in length; and varying, in breadth, from one to three miles, except at the point of junction between the upper and lower lake, where the breadth is contracted to narrow river breadth, and where a bridge has been constructed, along which the new road to Ballina and Sligo is carried. The upper lake is entirely devoid of interest: its banks are low, stony, and uncultivated; and, even with all the advantages of a fine evening, it looked positively ugly.

I passed by several farm-houses, newly erected on the bog and waste land, belonging to Lord Lucan. His lordship has built the houses, and given the adjacent land to tenants who are to pay no rent during the first seven years. This is so far liberal; but still the tenant has not a sufficient interest in the land he cultivates. To ensure the best possible results, it would be necessary that the cultivator should have a lease for a very long term of years; and that, after the expiration of the seven years during which no rent was to be paid, the precise rent should be stipulated during the different periods into which the duration of the lease might be divided; and this rent, especially during the first periods, should be fixed at a very low rate. It is not sufficient advantage to the cultivator that, during the first seven years of his possession, he pays no rent for uncultivated land, and a moderate rent for the remaining fourteen years of his lease, if, at the expiration of twenty-one years, he is liable to be charged the full value of all his accumulated labour on the land. Yet this, or something akin to it, has been hitherto too much the practice in Ireland. Improvements have been conducted too much on the principle of ultimate benefit to the landlord solely,—who, in many instances (some of which have come within my knowledge), takes advantage of the competition for land, and deprives the improving tenant of the legitimate fruit of his industry, by charging a rent for the improved land, which it requires its whole produce to pay.

The scenery is agreeable, but not any way striking, at the bridge which crosses the channel between the upper and lower lakes. It is a singular fact, for which I shall not endeavour to account, that Loch Conn regularly ebbs and flows, though not at periods corresponding with the tide. The lake is situated considerably above the level of the sea, and has no tide communication with it. The banks are, in many parts, of a fine sand, which shows the high-water line. The shores of the lower lake, on the west side, abound in

little bays and creeks; and show some bold outlines. The Nephin mountains rise at no great distance from its shore. The eastern banks of Loch Conn are low, and not very interesting. The country at a little distance from the lake is singularly ugly, flat, stony, and boggy. Everywhere, however, I saw attempts—and successful attempts—at cultivation; everywhere improvement *progressing*. I never saw finer oats than were growing on land which had only borne one former crop. Sea-weed is universally used here; and is carried a great distance up the country. A navigable communication between Loch Conn and the river Moy, below Ballina, would essentially serve all that part of Mayo which adjoins Loch Conn. Improvement must proceed slowly, where there are no facilities for carrying the produce to market.

Ballina is rather larger, and a better-looking town than Castlebar. It has one excellent street, the greater part of which is nearly new, and which contains many good houses, and shops which would be creditable to any town. It is also a town of very considerable trade. For several years previous to 1833, the export—chiefly of grain—had reached 10,000 tons. In 1833 it was under 8,000; but this decrease was chiefly owing to the failure of a house in the trade; and it was thought that, for 1834, the export would increase at least 1,000 tons. The retail trade is considerable; but is sadly crippled by absenteeism, and by the embarrassed circumstances of the squires and squireens.

Ballina has ample facilities for trade: the Moy is navigable from Killala bay to within a mile of the town; and to that point, where there is a good quay, vessels of 200 tons can come up. The river navigation, however, is defective, and stands much in need of improvement.

It is a fine old structure, the bridge at Ballina, and it is a fine river that flows beneath it. Just above the bridge are considerable rapids, and an extensive salmon fishery. Among other objects of interest at Ballina, is the magnificent Catholic chapel, now in course of being erected; and at a short

distance from the town, Colonel Gore owns a handsome mansion, which is worth a visit.

I found the condition of the poor, in Ballina, bad : and I regretted to learn that the number of poor, in Ballina, is greatly owing to the harshness of the neighbouring landlords, who charge rack-rents, and “drive” for their rent. The state of the land-occupiers in the surrounding country, is what might be expected. The size of farms is from twelve to twenty-four acres ; the average of good farms about twenty acres. The land is, of course, of various quality ; and the average rent, throughout the baronies, may be stated at about 28*s*. This is certainly more than the land, over-head, can bear. I found many who could live but on the verge of starvation ; and many who admitted they were in arrear, and never could pay their arrears. In the course of one of my excursions in the neighbouring country I found a farmer holding twenty-one acres, at 25*s*. per acre ; and about one-fourth of this quantity was marsh and bog. The rest was capable of growing oats. Now, let us consider what is likely to be the profit on an acre of oats, for which the farmer pays 25*s*.

Seven barrels of oats are about the average produce of an acre of land in this part of the country ; the value of which, at 12*s*. the barrel, will be 4*l*. 4*s*. The straw may be worth another pound : so that the whole produce of the acre, is 5*l*. 4*s*. We next come to the expenses. The rent is 1*l*. 5*s*. ; the seed may be stated at 1*l*. 5*s*. ; taxes at 6*s*. ; harrowing 3*s*. ; tithe (which, up to this time, at all events, has been exigible) 10*s*. The whole of these charges amount to 3*l*. 9*s*., which being deducted from 5*l*. 4*s*., the value of the produce, leaves 1*l*. 15*s*.,—which 1*l*. 15*s*. remains to the farmer for labour, and for the sustenance of his family. This profit, too, is only applicable to those acres of a farm capable of producing oats ; but in no farm is every acre arable. In the farm which led me to make these observations, no profit whatever, excepting the use of turf, would accrue from five of the acres, for each of which rent was alike charged ; and consequently, the 6*l*. 5*s*. of rent paid for these acres, becomes

a deduction from the profits of the remaining sixteen,—upon each of which, therefore, the profit is not 1*l.* 15*s.*, but 7*s.* 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* less than this sum. Another thing must also be considered. This is the most valuable crop the farmer can take off his land; and it does not leave the land worth 10*s.* an acre the following year.

Besides the more considerable farmers, there are many very small landholders located on the larger farms; and these are in a miserable condition. I found a number of these individuals gone to the harvesting. I have scarcely anywhere in Ireland seen more proofs of a pauper population than in Ballina. I counted no fewer than twenty-seven beggars round a coach which was about to start for Castlebar.

After three days spent at Ballina, and in its neighbourhood. I proceeded to Sligo. The greater part of the road between Ballina and Sligo is interesting only as exhibiting proofs of an improving country. An immense tract of bog-land on the right, is bounded by a range called the Lurgan hills; and on the left, the sea-line is described at some considerable distance. Everywhere in this neighbourhood, proofs are seen of recent triumphs obtained over bog and mountain land. Looking on every side, one would say, this is an improving country. But this improvement in husbandry, and extension of tillage, have not produced any corresponding effects on the condition of the people. The demand for labour still lags far behind the supply; the farmer can barely live out of his land, and has no sufficient permanent interest in his improvements; and between the higher and lower ranks, there is little intercourse, and little amicable relationship. In the early part of this day's journey, I had melancholy demonstration of the frequency of driving for rent. I passed two pounds; in one of which were three cows and a horse; in another, five cows and three horses.

Where the rent-charge on a farm is a fair one; and where the tenant either will not pay his rent, or through idleness cannot pay it, nobody will dispute the propriety of forcing

payment in the one case, and of ejecting the tenant in the other. I do not look upon him as a good landlord, who after letting his land at its value, permits his tenants to get into arrear. But I suspect, that driving for rent is rarely necessary, where the rent is regulated by the value of the land. Rent, in Ireland, is most commonly all that can be scraped together by the farmer, after paying the expense of labour, and seed, and bare subsistence. Wherever an increased profit is possible, rent is increased in proportion; and if we find in any district, advantages which would seem to bear peculiarly on the favourable condition of the farmer,—such as good roads, navigable communication, or abundance of cheap manure, we do not find the farmers in a better condition; we only find that higher rents are paid to the landlord. I fear that, so long as this disposition exists, improvements in public works would tend more to the benefit of the landlord than the tenant. It is little source of congratulation to the traveller in Ireland, that he sees the pigs about the miserable cabin by the road side, or that he sees within the cabin a wheel going, or a loom spinning; because these are only so many evidences of the difficulty of paying rent, and only so many sources of paying it. There are exceptions, no doubt; and where the linen trade exists, which is inherently a profitable trade, the loom is frequently the source of little comforts: but this is only confined to certain districts.

A few miles before reaching Sligo, a fine sea view opens on the left,—an extensive bay, indented by numerous narrower and picturesque inlets, with lofty boundaries, and in many places not wanting in wood. The situation of the little town of Balisedare, about four miles from Sligo, is extremely pretty. A foaming stream dashes, in a succession of fine rapids, past the town, and by the road-side; and a narrow and picturesque sea bay comes up nearly to these rapids. A straight and broad road runs between Balisedare and Sligo, which I reached a little before night-fall.

The situation of Sligo is beautiful: it stands in a rich, highly cultivated, and finely-wooded country. A magnificent

bay, with lofty banks, lies to the west: a fine river flows through the town; and towards the east, the banks of the river upwards are redolent of every kind of beauty, and soon expand into Loch Gilly,—one of the most lovely of the Irish lakes; and to which I shall presently conduct the reader.

Sligo has the look of a town of some consequence,—more so, I think, than any town I had seen since leaving Limerick.

In streets, houses, bustle, and shops, Sligo holds a respectable rank. The latter, indeed, are scarcely surpassed, even by those of Cork or Limerick. The retail trade, too, is very extensive; for Sligo is the chief mart for the north-west of Ireland; and without a due consideration of the geographical situation of Sligo, one might feel surprised at the very extensive warehouses of groceries, cloths, cottons, cutlery, &c. But Sligo stands in a very populous neighbourhood, and is itself a large town, containing at least 15,000 inhabitants; and there is no town of any note westward, nearer than Ballina; eastward, nearer than Enniskillen; northward, nearer than Ballyshannon; and southward, nearer than Boyle; the nearest of these towns nearly thirty miles distant.

The export trade of Sligo, is the largest in the north-west of Ireland. It consists chiefly of grain, and is steadily increasing. The export of oats from Sligo, in 1831, was 136,000 quarters; in 1832, it was 134,000 quarters; and in 1833, it had increased to 154,000 quarters. The export of wheat also has trebled within these three years: 3127 quarters were exported in 1833. The butter trade of Sligo, too, is increasing, steadily and rapidly. Not fewer than 150,000 casks were exported, from December 1832, to December 1833.

The provision trade has trebled with the last three years; and the pork trade has doubled itself: 8547 barrels were exported in 1833. The tonnage inwards, in 1833, was 19,600; the tonnage outwards, in 1831, was 21,000; in 1832, 19,452; in 1833, 30,000. The tonnage of foreign trade inwards, in 1833, was 3462.

Sligo enjoys some general trade; and counts among her citizens some rich merchants. The general trade is chiefly

in timber, and to the Baltic. Sligo has no manufactures. The linen trade scarcely exists. There are three breweries, and one distillery; but the distillery is not at work.

There are two Protestant churches in Sligo; a fever hospital, dispensaries, a mendicity society, a gaol—handsome, like all the new gaols in Ireland; and no fewer than three libraries,—one, a public subscription library, and two circulating libraries. These were the first libraries I had seen since leaving Limerick.

Religious and political animosity prevails to a considerable extent in Sligo. This I have generally found to be the case in Ireland, wherever there is not an overwhelming majority on one side. The Conservative, and Protestant population of Sligo, and the neighbourhood, is large,—of which there is a pretty strong evidence in the fact, that the only newspaper published in Sligo, is high Tory.

The chief proprietors of the town of Sligo, are Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Wynn. The land in the barony, especially Mr. Wynn's, is let extremely high. Mr. Wynn's tenants are, with very few exceptions, in arrear; but he is one of those short-sighted landlords, who is resolved at all costs to keep up the nominal amount of his rent-roll. His rents are taken in dribbles,—in shillings and copper; and agents have been known to accompany tenants to market with their produce, lest any part of its value should escape the landlord's pocket. This gentleman has been at great pains to establish a Protestant tenantry on his estate; and in the appearance of their houses, &c., there is some neatness, and some show of comfort: but these are not in reality in any better condition than the other tenantry. None of them are able to do more than barely to subsist: and they, as well as the Catholic tenantry, are generally in arrear: indeed, I found no one exception. The whole land in this barony averages 2*l.* 5*s.* per acre. In the county, excluding bog and mountain land, it averages about 26*s.*; and good cultivated land may average 2*l.* There is no living, and paying such rents.

Lord Palmerston's property is an honourable exception.

On an estate between Sligo and Ballyshannon, his lordship expends more in improvements,—in roads, drains, piers, corn stores, &c., than the amount of the whole revenue of the estate. In every way, improvements, and an improving tenantry, are encouraged; and the people on that estate are in a comparatively comfortable condition. This is one of the few instances I found, in which the tenantry on an estate were allowed to benefit by the advantages and improvements of the district.

I lay my account with being blamed by some, for mentioning landlords by name; but for this course, I expect to be commended by others. My desire is, not only to tell truths, but to tell them in the way most likely to produce some good results. First, as regards the public: general statements carry little weight with them. Now I want to enlist the public on my side, and constrain belief: but if I merely say, rents are high in this neighbourhood, or in that neighbourhood, I tell little more than the public know, because rents are well known to be generally high throughout Ireland; whereas, if I tell what amount of rent is paid, and to whom it is paid, my statement carries with it an authority, and makes an impression, which no general statement could do. Then, in the next place, as regards landlords. Why should I confound the good with the bad? But if I made a general statement, that rents were high in a certain neighbourhood, I should be acting unfairly towards those to whom the observation is not applicable. No just and humane landlord will be displeased at the favourable mention of his name; and if those of whom a less favourable mention is made, be displeased, my object is thereby partly helped; because if it be displeasing to a man to be told that he is heartless and oppressive, it is possible he may wish to avoid a repetition of that which is unpleasant, by removing the cause. But above all, in naming some hard landlords, I fix the public eye upon them; and that is something. The bad landlords of Ireland deserve no favour: their sordidness, injustice, and oppression; their carelessness of those who depend upon them; their heartless desertion of

their country: what have these not done? How much misery,—how much poverty,—how much crime are they answerable for? And why, then, should the bad landlords of Ireland be spared? Spectacles of misery may not move them; the supplications of those whom they oppress may be unheard,—or if heard, unheeded; but the severe eye of public reprobation is difficult to withstand; and the measure of justice, which mercy and compassion would never deal out, may be made to run over by the strong tide of public reproof. Let me trust, that this hope may be realized: On the publication of the first edition of this work, the reviews gave full effect to my observations on this head; and I am satisfied I have succeeded, through the instrumentality of the public press, in fixing the public eye upon some, who have cause to shrink from its scrutiny; while at the same time I have the satisfaction of believing, that, through the same medium, I have rescued from obloquy the characters of others, who had long been the objects of unmerited censure. But to return.

Sligo is a decidedly improving town. With the exception of two or three months in the year, there is employment for the people; and I did not observe many symptoms in the town of a pauper population. In the general aspect of the population, I perceived an improvement. I saw fewer tatters than I had been accustomed to; and fewer bare feet on market day, when all wear shoes and stockings who can. I observed also that a large proportion of the men wore clean linen shirts. The poor of Sligo are not increased in numbers by ejectments in the country. This is not the practice of the landlords here. They do not drive for rent, or eject. They excuse the arrear, and allow the tenant to quit. This has the appearance, at first sight, of generosity; but it is, in fact, matter of necessity. Exorbitant rents are irrecoverable by driving, or by any other means. How much more rational it would be to lower rents, and actually to receive the amount of one's rent-roll.

I found at Sligo a considerable change in the dress and

manners of the people. Here I could not discover any traces of Spanish origin. The women were no longer seen with the hoods of their cloaks thrown over their heads; nor were the men seen with huge top-coats, as in the more southwestern parts. The women wore caps and bonnets; and the girls nothing on their heads. There appeared to be much love of dress among all ranks; and among the lower classes, singular discrepancies. A well-dressed woman might be seen carrying in her arms a baby decked out in muslin, lace, and ribbon, and by her side a boy running with bare feet and ragged clothes; or a girl with a tattered gown, and without shoes and stockings, might display a fine shawl or a handsome frill.

Sligo is a cheap town. Besides the regular markets, every kind of meat is carried from door to door: mutton so bought, averages 4*d.* per lb.; beef, 6*d.*; pork, 2*d.*; flour was 2*s.* 6*d.* the first quality, and 1*s.* 10*d.* second quality, when I visited Sligo. Potatoes were 3½*d.* a stone; butter was 7*d.* per lb.; a pair of fowls, 10*d.*; a good turkey, in the season, costs 2*s.*; a green goose, 10*d.* Potheen whiskey might be purchased 2*s.* 6*d.* under the price of parliament whiskey.

Sligo possesses the ruins of a once spacious monastery; the remains are yet extensive, and some parts of them are in tolerable preservation. Three sides of the cloister yet remain entire, covered with an arched roof; and the pillars and arches are of good workmanship. The east window is beautiful; and some tombs within exhibited considerable elegance of design. The monastery is said to have been founded in the year 1245.

The environs of Sligo are beautiful. The day after I reached Sligo, I ascended an inconsiderable hill, called "the Cairns," at a short distance from the town, and enjoyed a prospect from it, which is not often commanded from higher elevations;—a beautiful lake, dotted with islands, fringed with wood, and its banks adorned by fine country seats, and extensive lawns; a broad river, running from the lake, through a rich, green, shaded, and picturesque country; a bay of the

sea, with magnificent mountain boundaries ; and beyond, the great ocean itself ; a town, with its mass of buildings, and ancient remains ; and a wide, undulating, richly-wooded and picturesque country, with many villages, seats, and cottages ; —such is the assemblage of objects which form the prospect, from the elevation called “ the Cairns.”

But the chief object of attraction, in the neighbourhood of Sligo, is Loch Gilly ; a lake which is not sufficiently known, to enjoy the reputation it deserves. I hired a boat at Sligo, and ascended the river, through a succession of beautiful scenery, to the domain of Hazelwood, the property of Mr. Wynn. This is a very lovely spot : the views of the lake, from a hundred points, are enchanting ; and in the disposition of lawn, wood, and shrubbery, taste and art have taken ample advantage of the gifts of nature. Finer evergreens I never saw in the most southern countries. The laurels and bays, grown into great trees, rivalled, if they did not surpass, those of Woodstock or Curraghmore ; and here, I again found the arbutus,—not indeed quite equal in its perfections to the arbutus of Killarney, but not greatly its inferior ; and giving to the scenery all that advantage of colouring, which is the boast of Killarney. The timber too, on this domain, is equal to almost any I have seen ; and I often found myself pausing before some magnificent ash, oak, elm, or lime, throwing its deep shade across the green amphitheatre, which it seemed to have made for itself.

But I must not forget Loch Gilly, which, indeed, it would be difficult to do. The domain of Hazelwood extends over that part of the banks of the river where it widens into the lake, and forms the first promontory, and receding shore of the latter. I walked across the promontory, and embarked on the lake on the other side. Loch Gilly is about eight miles long, and from one to two broad ; and, in the character of beauty, will bear a comparison with any lake in Ireland. Its scenery is not stupendous—scarcely even anywhere bold : but it is “ beautiful exceedingly.” Its boundaries are not mountains ; but hills of sufficient elevation to form a pic-

turesque and striking outline. The hill sides, which in some places rise abruptly from the water, and which in others slope more gently, are covered to a considerable elevation with wood; and the lake is adorned by twenty-three islands, almost every one of them finely wooded. Here, too, as well as on Hazelwood domain, I found that the *arbutus* is not confined to Killarney. The extent of Loch Gilly is highly favourable to its beauty. The eye embraces at once its whole length and breadth; the whole circumstance of its shores; all their varieties and contrasts at once; all its islands. One charm is not lost in the contemplation of another, as in a greater lake. The whole is seen at once, and enjoyed. I remained many hours on Loch Gilly, rowing here and there, or not moving at all; landing on its islands; two of which—Church island and Cottage island—are full of beauty; putting ashore in little coves and inlets; and visiting a holy well, two or three hundred yards from the banks; where I saw eleven devotees, four of whom went from station to station on their knees. I also visited a house of public resort near the lake, which the citizens of Sligo frequent on Sundays; and tasted their favourite beverage, called *scolteen*; composed of the following *elegant* ingredients—whiskey, eggs, sugar, butter, carraway seed, and beer.

The inhabitants of Sligo did not appear to me a healthy race; I thought I never saw so many sickly, pale-faced people. It is possible that fancy may have assisted this conclusion, having heard so much of the extraordinary visitation of cholera, which two years before threatened to depopulate the town. Nowhere, in Ireland, did cholera rage with such deadly violence as in Sligo; and I found in the town, when I visited it, the greatest dread of its re-appearance,—a few cases having appeared at Ballina, and in some of the intervening villages.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Journey to Boyle and Enniskillen—Singular Usage—Loch Arrow—Boyle—Boyle Abbey—Lord Lorton—Land and Tenantry—Domestic Feelings and Home Comforts in England and in Ireland—Rockingham House—Carrick-on-Shannon—Loch Allen, and the Source of the Shannon—Ariana Iron Works—The Shannon Navigation—Journey to Enniskillen—Ballinamore—The people of this district—Swalinbar—Florence Court—Approach to Enniskillen—Situation of the Town, and beauty of its Environs—Prosperity of Enniskillen—A respectable Population—Neighbouring Proprietors—Lords Enniskillen, Ely, and Belmore—Trade of Enniskillen—Prices of Provisions—Castle Coole.

My route now lay in an opposite direction from the coast, and the great northern coast road. I was desirous of visiting some parts of the interior of the country, which I had not been able to comprehend in any former part of my journey; and, first, I shaped my course to Boyle, which lies about thirty miles south of Sligo, in the county of Roscommon, purposing to proceed from thence, by Carrick-on-Shannon, across the counties of Leitrim and Cavan, to Enniskillen and its interesting environs.

The first few miles of the road, from Sligo to Boyle, I found to be the same as I had already travelled. I passed through the village of Balisedare; but then struck to the left, skirting the pretty village of Coloony. Beyond this village I found a fertile and tolerably well cultivated country—a considerable

part of it, however, under pasture—and no greater part of it bog-land than might probably be wanted for consumption. I was surprised to meet, every few hundred yards on this road, carts heavily laden with country people, many of them of the lowest orders, and with different articles of furniture piled upon or attached to the carts; and I learned with some astonishment, that all these individuals were on their way to sea-bathing. This is a universal practice over these parts of Ireland. A few weeks passed at the sea-side is looked upon to be absolutely necessary for the preservation of health; and persons of all classes migrate thither, with their families. In my way to Boyle, I met upwards of twenty carts laden with women, children, and boys. One may ask how the people afford this annual expense; but the expense is extremely small. There are numerous cabins and cottages, at the lower end of Sligo, on the bay, in which a room is hired at 1s. 6d. per week. This is almost the whole of the expense; for all carry with them,—besides their beds and an iron pot,—a quantity of meal, some sacks of potatoes, and even turf, if there be room for it.

The road to Boyle runs all the way by the side of the river Arrow; a pretty, clear, rapid stream, as its name would denote; and flowing out of a lake of the same name. After reaching the lake, the road continues to skirt its bank, though the grounds attached to some gentlemen's seats intervene between the road and the lake. Loch Arrow is a pretty lake, about seven miles long, and from one to two broad; and without presenting any very striking beauties, the scenery of its shores is of a very pleasing kind. There are sloping, green, and cultivated banks; finely wooded promontories,—low but stretching far into the lake; and some very green islands, reposing on the still waters.

After leaving Loch Arrow, the road ascended considerably, and passed through a wilder and very poor country. I never saw poorer cabins than in passing through this district. Many of them were not to be distinguished from the mud heaps around; they were fully as black, and no bigger; and

built of the same material. Scarcely a patch of cultivation was visible around any of them.

The first view of Boyle and its neighbourhood, from the heights by which I approached, is very striking. Loch Key, and the adjacent splendid domain of Lord Lorton, with its spreading woods and islands, lie a few miles to the left; and Boyle itself, far below, yet built on a rising ground, embosomed in wood, looks like a spot where one might expect to find comfort and repose. And this expectation is not disappointed; for the inn at Boyle—there is but one—is excellent, and offers an agreeable contrast to the more ambitious hotel at Sligo. Let me not omit to do a good turn, when I chance to have an opportunity. After spending three days, very uncomfortably at one hotel in Sligo, I tried the hotel kept by Mrs. Ross; and I recommend all travellers to try Mrs. Ross in the first instance. There is nothing very attractive without, but there is a fair share of comfort within.

Boyle is a very pretty town, situated on a fine rapid river, of the same name. It is but a very small town, but it is neat and tolerably clean, and has a great deal of wood, and a fine country round it. It also contains a particularly fine ruin, called Boyle Abbey: certainly one of the most beautiful ruins I have seen in Ireland. There is a nave, a choir, and transepts, and a square tower rising from the centre of the cross. One pauses too under many fine arches, and surveys some curious workmanship; and the mere lover of the picturesque will be greatly gratified with the general outline of the ruin,—its situation, the moss-grown and ivied walls, and the great ash-tree that grows within them.

The town, and whole district of country round, is the property of Lord Lorton. I spent some time in the neighbourhood of Boyle, and made myself acquainted, as far as I was able, with the condition of the people. This I found to be very various. All who held their land on old leases, I found to be comfortable: rents were decidedly low: and the farmers admitted that they could pay their rent, and even save a little money. Lord Lorton has lately divided those holdings which

have lapsed, into farms of sixteen acres each, and given new leases : no smaller holdings than these are allowed. In the present state of Ireland, I have my doubts whether a landlord be justified in this course, unless he has a tract of unreclaimed land, whereon to offer those a holding who are dispossessed ; or pays the expense of emigration, for those who wish to take advantage of it. Driving for rent is not practised on Lord Lorton's estate. When three half-years are unpaid, the tenant is ejected ; but the arrear is forgiven. There is no reasonable objection to this course ; but if the adoption of it becomes frequently necessary, the necessity of having recourse to it might naturally suggest a reduction of rent. The new leases on these estates are for short periods, and the rents are not exorbitantly high. Many very small holders are located on the land in this neighbourhood, by the farmers who hold old leases. These, in conformity with the system pursued by Lord Lorton, will by and by be cleared. The tenants on this estate pay nothing for turf, and some poor creatures are permitted to earn a trifle by cutting and selling it in the town. I should say of the agriculturists of this part of Ireland generally, that they are able to pay their rents, and live off their land. I noticed great deficiency of cross roads in this part of the country. Many farmers and farm-houses appeared to have scarcely any access to them at all.

In my visits among the country people here, I could not help making an observation, which had been repeatedly forced upon my attention in other parts of Ireland ; I allude to the less affection that exists between man and wife, among the country people in Ireland, than is found to adorn domestic life in the humbler spheres on the other side of the water. I think no one can have visited many of the Irish cabins and farm-houses, without having been struck with this fact. Marriage is not, among these classes in Ireland, the same thing which it is among the like classes in England. It is seldom the result of long and tried affection on both sides ; but is either a rash step, taken by unthinking children, or

else a mere mercenary bargain, in which the woman has little voice, and in which her partner is actuated solely by sordid views. I have no doubt that the effects of this are not altogether unimportant as regards the condition of the people of Ireland. Who can say, how much of those home comforts which are gathered around the hearth of an English country fire-side, is the result of that strife for mutual happiness, which can arise only from mutual affection ; or how much of that utter want of and indifference to comfort, which characterize an Irish cabin, may arise from the absence of domestic feelings ?

Rockingham-house, the seat of Lord Lorton, is situated about five miles from Boyle, and is every way a magnificent place. The domain is of great extent, and nature and art have combined to render it attractive. It is seldom that so fine a lake as Loch Key lies partly within a domain ; but Rockingham possesses this advantage. The house stands upon an elevation, sloping down to the lake, which, with its many wooded islands and promontories, is spread out below. These islands are extremely beautiful : fine timber and delightful verdure cover most of them ; and upon some are seen the ruins of castles and of religious edifices,

Rockingham-house is one of the most celebrated in Ireland. Mr. Nield, in his survey of the county of Roscommon, says, " One of the most striking peculiarities of the house, consists in its very insulated position, no office of any kind being visible ; but the whole being surmounted by beautiful shorn grass, interspersed with beds of flowers and ornamented walks. This arrangement has been effected by having most of the offices of the basement story covered over, and subterranean passages carried from underneath the eminence on which the house stands, towards the lake, in one direction, and in another, towards the stables, which stand at a considerable distance, screened by trees ; the covered passage, however, does not reach the whole way to the latter ; but merely far enough to prevent the appearance of movement near the mansion." Rockingham-house has another peculiarity. It is built solely

of marble ; of which a specimen of the highest polish, and of an ornamental form, is seen on the great staircase. The marble was obtained from a quarry belonging to Lord Lorton, on these estates. Every part of Lord Lorton's domain is kept in excellent order ; and his lordship constantly employs a great many men upon his estate, at 1s. per day.

I now left Boyle for Enniskillen, by slow and short journeys. For several miles after leaving Boyle, the road skirts Lord Lorton's domain, and then passes through a rather fine country, to Carrick-on-Shannon. Here, I again found that majestic river which I had parted from a month before : and I still found it the same noble stream. The Shannon, at Carrick, is upwards of two hundred miles from the sea ; and I scarcely could discover any diminution of the stream, which flows a hundred miles lower down. From Carrick and its neighbourhood, I made two excursions ; one down, and another up the river. There is much interest in the banks of the river for ten or twelve miles down, passing Jamestown and Drumsna. Up the river, the interest is less. Leitrim is a miserable little place ; and betwixt that town,—the last on the Shannon,—and Loch Allen, there is little attraction. Loch Allen is certainly the true source of the Shannon. Like every other lake, Loch Allen has its feeders. Two considerable streams fall in at its head ; and many small rivulets, —upwards of twenty in number,—fall into it from different directions around ; but these are the feeders of Loch Allen, not the source of the Shannon. It is only where a great river enters a lake, after a long previous course, that the lake is not properly the source of the river which flows out of it. Such, for example, is the Rhone, which, after a long course, enters the lake of Geneva, which is nothing more than an expansion of the Rhone : but as nothing deserving the name of a river flows into the head of Loch Allen, the loch is certainly entitled to be considered the source of the Shannon.

Loch Allen is not in itself an interesting, or beautiful, or picturesque lake ; neither is the scenery on its banks sufficiently bold, to make the smallest approach to grandeur : it

is merely wild and solitary; and the only further interest which the lake possesses, arises from its being the source of the Shannon. The lake is embosomed in hills of a moderate elevation, not picturesque in their outline, nor clothed with wood; and there are some, though not many, islands scattered over its surface; and upon one of them, a small monastic remain is still visible. Loch Allen is about seven miles long, and varies from one to four in breadth; and its average depth is said to be greater than any of the lower expansions of the Shannon. The chief mountain boundary of the lake, is "the Iron Mountain,"—so designated from the riches which it contains in this valuable metal. In all the gullies which have been worn by the mountain floods, iron ore is to be found in great abundance, both in large masses and in minute particles; and the under strata of the neighbouring heights is composed of alternate layers of iron and limestone. It is now more than forty years since iron works have been established in this neighbourhood, known by the name of the Arigna iron works,—Arigna being the name of the stream which flows by them, and which joins the Shannon, just as it flows out of Loch Allen,—one branch of the river, indeed, emptying itself into the lake. Little advantage has hitherto resulted from working the Arigna iron works; but there is little reason to doubt, that—the Shannon navigation being now extended to Loch Allen—capital embarked in these works would find a profitable investment.

I had now seen the banks of the Shannon from its mouth to its source; and I think I may venture to say, that although we cannot find on the banks of the Shannon that precipitous wood scenery, which distinguishes the Rhine, nor the extreme richness and softness, which lie along the Loire, or the Garonne, infinitely greater variety is found throughout the course of the Shannon, than is presented either on these or any other rivers that I recollect. And the Shannon possesses one attribute, which, as far as I know, is exclusively its own. It is navigable (with some slight interruptions) from its mouth to its source, a distance of 234 miles. In the extent of its

navigation, therefore, though not of its course, it ranks with many of the great continental rivers. The interruptions to its navigation, which consist of rapids here and there, have all been overcome by canal cuts; though much yet remains to be done, both in improving the canals, and the navigation of the river itself. The whole fall of the Shannon, from Loch Allen to the sea, is one hundred and forty-six feet,—which is only seven inches and a fraction in a mile: and it is a curious fact, that the greatest fall is not during the first part of its course, which one might naturally expect, but in that part which approaches the sea. From Killaloe to Limerick, a distance of but fifteen miles, the fall is ninety-seven feet; and from the source of the river to Killaloe, the whole fall is but forty-nine feet.

I now left Carrick for Enniskillen. The road from Carrick to Ballinamore possesses but little interest. A number of small lakes, with one of considerable size, lie on both sides of the road; but none of them possess any remarkable attractions; and the country is in general poor, and badly cultivated. I visited one or two houses on the road, the dwellings of small landholders, and found the inmates in a very poor condition, and holding their land under men as needy as themselves.

Ballinamore is a small town, existing, and existing very badly, by agriculture. The whole of the neighbourhood, with very few exceptions, is fearfully rack-rented: the land, which is generally poor, is let by competition to the highest bidder; and rents are covenanted for, that can never be paid. The property of Lord Southwell, however, which is situated in this district, is an exception. It is unquestionably amongst the nobility, and the largest proprietors, that these exceptions are chiefly to be found,—a fact that may probably be attributable to the better circumstances of the great proprietors, who are not, generally, so embarrassed as the smaller landowners. I found that the landholders in the neighbourhood of Ballinamore were necessitated to send every particle of produce, except potatoes, to market, to make up their

rents; and that they lived as miserably as the owner of the poorest cabin.

The country between Ballinamore and Swanlinbar,—part of which is in Leitrim county, part in Cavan,—I found very little more interesting than that between Carrick and Ballinamore. There is a poverty look about every thing. The country is but half cultivated; and it supports a needy gentry, crushed farmers, and a miserable peasantry. After passing Swanlinbar, things improve. Improvement is visible in the aspect of the country; and a decided improvement in the appearance of the houses and their inhabitants.

I remained a day in this neighbourhood (not in Swanlinbar), that I might have an opportunity of visiting Florence Court, the seat of the Earl of Enniskillen, and the surrounding country. This beautiful seat is situated at the foot of a fine chain of hills; and the unequal surface of the ground over which his lordship's park extends, gives great picturesqueness to the views, and has materially assisted art, in the embellishments which she has scattered around. Many fine old trees beautify this domain, and the grouping of wood is very effective. Florence Court wants water only, to make it a paradise. This mansion is every way worthy of the grounds which surround it.

The approach to Enniskillen, from Swanlinbar, struck me greatly. A rich, broken, and beautiful country lies on either side of the road; a mountain outline bounds the greater part of the horizon; and the town of Enniskillen itself rises on the opposite side of a broad sheet of water, covering a considerable extent of elevated ground, and presenting a bold front of strong bastions and grey walls.

The situation of Enniskillen is every way delightful. Loch Erne, the noblest, in point of extent, of any of the Irish lakes, and which has been called the Winandermere of Ireland,—an appellation which I shall by and by endeavour to show, it is well entitled to,—spreads into an upper and lower lake, above and below the town, though, from the distance between them, which is not less than four miles,

they ought rather to be considered two distinct lakes. This communication between the two lakes is not more than river breadth, and in one part separates into two branches, encircling a tolerably elevated island; and upon this island stands the town of Enniskillen. Two handsome bridges connect the town with the mainland, at each end of the island; and almost the whole of the island is covered by the town. On the opposite banks of the water, on both sides of the town, the scenery is of the most *riant* description. When I visited the neighbourhood, the corn harvest was just beginning, and the hay harvest was nearly over. On the sunny slopes that rise on all sides, the golden fields of ripe corn were beautifully mingled with the brilliant green that follows the destruction of the meadow. Abundance of wood, and the broken surface of the country, gave sufficient shade to the landscape, which was, on all sides, imaged in the still, deep, broad waters that surround the town; and altogether, I shall long preserve in my memory the recollection of this beautiful spot.

But this is not all I have to say in favour of Enniskillen; I found it *one of* the most respectable-looking towns I had seen in Ireland; and its population, by far *the most* respectable-looking, that I had anywhere yet seen. I speak of course of the lower classes; and I make no exception of either Dublin, or Cork, or Limerick, or any other place. I saw a population,—the first I had yet seen,—without rags; I saw scarcely a bare foot, even among the girls; there was a neat, tidy look among the women, who had not, as in other places, their uncombed hair hanging about their ears; and the men appeared to me to have a decent farmer-like appearance.

Enniskillen is a busy, and a rising town; improvement is everywhere discernible. Many new buildings are seen; thatched houses, scarcely at all; and the suburbs even are respectable. Enniskillen abounds in respectable shops; and I never saw shops better filled than they were on market day; I understood that many of the tradespeople were wealthy, and that the retail trade is brisk and profitable.

This, and the generally improving condition of the town, which possesses but little manufacture, are evidences of the prosperous condition of the surrounding agricultural population,—and, by implication, speaks favourably also of the landlords. Lords Enniskillen, Ely, and Belmore, are the three great proprietors; but there are many resident gentlemen besides. The town belongs altogether to Lord Enniskillen, who is generally well spoken of, and who in letting his land endeavours to ascertain its real value. I found the farmers of this neighbourhood enjoying some comforts, and not so ground down to the earth as in the south and west. Potatoes are not the sole diet here: the country is a most fruitful one; and much of the wheat and oats is consumed in the surrounding district. There is some export of grain to Derry, Armagh, &c., but the greater part is consumed. The export of live cattle and pigs, from Enniskillen to Derry, is also considerable. Most important advantages would accrue to Enniskillen, by opening an inland navigation to the sea: and nothing could be easier than this. From the town, there is already an uninterrupted navigation through Loch Erne, to the exit of the river, which, not eight miles distant from the lake, falls into the bay of Donegal: and half of this distance, the river is already navigable; so that it requires but a cut of four miles to open a water communication, not only from Enniskillen, but from the upper lake to the sea,—a distance of not less than sixty miles. It is almost impossible to calculate the benefit which would be conferred upon the great extent of country bordering on the two Loch Ernes, by this very obvious and unexpensive undertaking.

Enniskillen enjoys also a considerable linen trade. From three to four hundred pieces are sold at each fortnight's market; and it speaks well for the prospects of the trade, that many merchants leave the market disappointed of purchases; and that three times the quantity actually sold, would find buyers if it were brought to market. It is a fact, that greatly more flax seed has been sown this year, than on any former year.

The population of Enniskillen is about one-third Protestant : and the town and neighbourhood are Conservative in their politics. Three newspapers are published in the town, all Conservative. One is Toryish, a second Tory, and a third high Tory. It is singular, that in a town like this, there should be no circulating or public library.

The price of provisions in Enniskillen is reasonable. When I visited it, potatoes were at $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ a stone ; 120 lbs. of oatmeal were sold at $8s. 6d.$; second quality of flour was $1s. 6d.$ per stone. Meat was from $5d.$ to $6d.$ per lb. ; fine fowls, $10d.$ a couple. Labour in town was at $1s.$ a day ; but for constant employment, $10d.$; and in the country did not exceed $8d.$ The provision and retail trade of Enniskillen is of course benefited by the town being military head-quarters. During eight months in the year there is pretty full employment for labour in Enniskillen. Just before the corn harvest began, and after the hay harvest had finished, I saw about eighty persons in want of employment, and waiting for hire.

One of the most finished domains in Ireland,—or, I might say, in the British dominions, is Castle Coole, the seat of the Earl of Belmore. It contains within it an extraordinary variety of fine scenery. The disposition of wood, water, and lawn, is as near perfection as can be produced by the union of nature and art. The beech and oak trees, everywhere scattered over the park, are of the most gigantic dimensions ; and there is a beautiful specimen of close sylvan scenery, where the game is preserved. Within the park, too, are several smooth oval mounts, beautiful to look upon, and from which all the charming variety of the landscape is seen to perfection. I climbed to the top of the conical hill above the castle, called Topid, and enjoyed a very extensive, and certainly a very engaging prospect. Among the objects most conspicuous in the landscape, are two round hills towards the north, called Bessy Bell, and Mary Gray,—names familiar to every one.

The mansion of Castle Coole is the finest house in the

modern style, that I had seen in Ireland. There is a beautiful façade; a portico, with four columns in the centre, supporting a pediment; and two equal wings are connected with the centre, by handsome colonnades of fluted pillars, of the Doric order. The interior is equally magnificent; and splendid mirrors, porphyry pilasters, and inlaid doors, remind one of the palaces and churches of Italy and Spain.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Devenish Island, and its Round Tower—Kesh—Loch Erne, the Winandermere of Ireland—Character of the Lake—The County of Fermanagh, and its Population—The Clergy of the Church of Ireland—Church Reform—Land, Land-owners, and Landholders—Labourers—Journey to Loch Dergh—Pettigo—Loch Dergh, and its Island—The Pilgrim—Details of the Doings there—Visit to the Island—Extraordinary Scenes—Further Details—Popularity of this Pilgrimage.

ONE of the most interesting spots in the neighbourhood of Enniskillen, is Devenish island, with its round tower, and other ancient relics. It stands just where the lower lake expands; and is about two miles from Enniskillen. One may visit it either by boat from Enniskillen, or follow the road from the town, and make use of the ferry-boat. The island slopes gently from the water's edge, in a fine green swell, but is entirely destitute of wood; and is said to contain upwards of seventy acres. The round tower of Devenish is considered to be the most perfect in Ireland, and, altogether, the finest specimen of these singular structures. The height of the tower is eighty-two feet; the thickness of its walls three feet five inches; the circumference forty-nine feet; and the diameter, inside, nine feet two inches. Twelve feet above the door-way there is a window, angularly pointed; and, higher up, another window, nearly square. Still higher are the four windows, common in all these towers; and the key-stone, above each, is ornamented with a human head.

But the round tower is not the only relic on Devenish island. There are also several monastic remains; particularly the ruins of an abbey, which is situated on the most elevated part of the island. Some parts of the abbey are yet in a considerably perfect state of preservation, particularly the tower; from the summit of which an extensive prospect is enjoyed over the lake and the surrounding country. The other remains, on the island, are in a less perfect state; and their workmanship is of a far ruder description than that by which the abbey is distinguished. Next to the rock of Cashel, I look upon Devenish island to be the most interesting spot in Ireland, to those who are attracted by the union of the antique and the picturesque.

I left Enniskillen, greatly pleased with the town and its neighbourhood. I had seen no such fine and fruitful country since I had visited the counties of Tipperary and Limerick; but there is greater beauty here, united to as much cultivation. The country about Enniskillen is more undulating and wavy; and the distant outlines are more striking: nor had I seen in any town in Ireland a population so little ragged, and altogether so respectable.

It is very likely that many of my readers never heard of the town of Kesh, or Kish, as some call it. It is a small, a very small town, or rather a village, situated near to the right bank of Loch Erne, about ten miles from Enniskillen. Here, or at least in its neighbourhood, I remained for three or four days, making myself acquainted with the beautiful lake close by; and observing and inquiring into the condition of the inhabitants of the neighbouring country. The road, between Enniskillen and Kesh, does not keep all the way close to the lake, though sufficiently near to enable the traveller to catch beautiful glimpses; and, now and then, to command the greater part of its expanse. Ely Lodge, the residence of the Marquis of Ely, and its surrounding grounds, are seen to great advantage on the road to Kesh. They lie on the opposite side of the lake, just at the point where the road first begins to skirt it.

I said that Loch Erne has been called the Winandermere of Ireland; and that it might be easy to justify the propriety of the appellation, which was, no doubt, intended as a compliment to Loch Erne. In length, breadth, and shape, Loch Erne and Winandermere do not greatly differ; and inasmuch as the character of beauty, rather than of sublimity, is applicable to both, the comparison is just. I presume it is on account of these resemblances, that Loch Erne and Winandermere have been likened to each other. I think, however, that if the claims of these two lakes were examined more in detail, Loch Erne would bear away the palm; and chiefly upon this ground, that there is no part of it without high claims to beauty; whereas the lower end of Winandermere is greatly deficient in those attractions which have earned so high a reputation for the lake generally; but which are chiefly to be found in the centre and upper parts of it. Loch Erne, round its whole circumference, does not offer one tame and uninteresting view; everywhere there is beauty, and beauty of a very high order. In some places, the banks are thickly wooded to the water's edge: in other places, the fairest and smoothest slopes rise from the margin, shaping themselves into knolls and green velvety lawns; here and there, finely wooded promontories extend far into the lake, forming calm sequestered inlets and bays; and, sometimes, a bold fore-ground—not perhaps of mountains, but of lofty hills—juts forward, and contrasts finely with the richness and cultivation on either side. And what shall I say of the numerous islands—far more numerous than those on Winandermere, and as beautiful as the most beautiful of them;—some of them densely covered with wood; some green and swelling; and some large enough to exhibit the richest union of wood and lawn; some laid out as pleasure-grounds, with “pleasure-houses,” for those to whom they pertain; and some containing the picturesque ruins of ancient and beautiful edifices! Nor must I forget the magnificent mansions that adorn the banks of Loch Erne, and which add greatly to the general effect of the landscape. Without making any enu-

meration of these, I would particularize Ely Lodge, Castle Caldwell, and the charming domain of General Archdall, rich in all that constitutes the perfection of beauty.

I shall not easily forget,—nor would I ever wish to forget, the delightful hours I one day spent on the shores of this more than Winandermere of Ireland. It was a day of uncommon beauty: the islands seemed to be floating on a crystal sea; the wooded promontories threw their broad shadows half across the still bays; the fair slopes, and lawny knolls, stood greenly out from among the dark sylvan scenery that intervened; here and there, a little boat rested on the bosom of some quiet cove; and in some of the shallow bays, or below the slopes of some of the green islands, cattle stood, single or in groups, in the water. I confidently assert, that lower Loch Erne, take it all in all, is the most beautiful lake in the three kingdoms; and but for the majestic Alpine outline that bounds the horizon on the upper part of Lake Leman,—Lake Leman itself could not contend in beauty, with this little-visited lake in the county of Fermanagh.

The county of Fermanagh is Conservative, and considerably Protestant. It will, no doubt, be deemed a curious fact, that the parish in which I rested a few days, Magher-Culmoony,—a parish fourteen Irish miles long and several broad,—contains not any one place of worship, of any denomination, except the parish church. It is doubtful if there be another example of this in Ireland, or, I might perhaps add, in England either. Such examples would not have been so rare, if the church of Ireland had possessed more ministers of religion, like, in character, activity, and talent, to the Protestant rector of Magher-Culmoony. I am not one of those who ascribe *all* the evils of Ireland to Popery; but I am one of those who think Protestantism the better religion for the people, and the safer for the state; and think also, that it ought to have been, and ought still to be, the study of government, to encourage the growth of Protestantism, by every wise and legitimate means; nor can I let slip this opportunity of observing, from all I have seen and learned in

Ireland, that one of the most certain means of increasing Protestantism in Ireland, will be, such measures of reform in the Irish church, as will encourage and reward the working clergy, at the expense of those who do not, or who will not work; as will sweep away pluralities, and forbid non-residence; as will place Protestant education on a better footing; and as will provide for the final and effectual settlement of the tithe question.

But to return to the parish of which I was speaking. During the incumbency of the present minister, the Protestant congregation has increased more than one half: and in the adjoining parish of Fintona, under the same individual, the results of piety and activity are equally favourable. A Protestant congregation of seven hundred, may be seen there any Sunday; and the Protestant congregation has increased at least one-third within the last few years. The tithe in the parish of Magher-Culmoony is under the Commutation Act, and averages scarcely ten-pence the Irish acre.

Not having had a previous acquaintance with Ireland before visiting it in the present year, I cannot speak from personal knowledge, of the improvement in conduct, and activity, which is said to have taken place within the last few years, amongst the clergy of the church of Ireland. I can speak, however, of what I have seen. I have seen many pious and well-intentioned men; but few active men. I have seen some, whose conduct was little in unison with their calling; and I have seen many, whose listlessness rendered their calling ineffectual for any good purpose. This, however, I can say with perfect truth; that wherever a really good and judiciously zealous clergyman is found, respect attends him; and results favourable to Protestantism follow his ministrations. That which Protestantism wants in Ireland, is a resident working clergy, placed in comfortable circumstances; and in the zeal for church reform, I trust it will not be forgotten, that twenty, or ten Protestants require, equally as if their numbers were hundreds in place of tens, and have an equal right to demand, a Protestant house to go

to, and a clergyman to administer to them the consolations of religion.

The condition of the land occupiers in the baronies of Fermanagh, is superior to the condition of the same classes in most other parts which I had visited. But, at the same time, looking merely to externals, and especially judging by the houses in which the people live, one would certainly form too favourable conclusions. The love of a neat exterior, which is observable in this district, and in many other districts of the north, is not so much the result of superior condition, as of other causes, the chief of which is, that very many of the landholders are Scotch and English by descent; and that the force of example has prevailed. Another reason is, that there are many resident gentry, most of whom are unembarrassed in their circumstances. From attentive observation and anxious inquiry, I have reason to say, that rents throughout this county are from 5*s.* to 8*s.* an acre too high; with the exception of the old takes. The utmost industry is required, in order that a man may pay his rent, and live in anything like comfort; but in order that there should be an accumulation of capital amongst farmers, rents would require to be lower. I should certainly say, however, that any industrious farmer, occupying a fair-sized farm, may be comfortable in this county, though he may not be able to get rich. The produce of an acre of good land here, may be worth 8*l.*; and at 25*s.* rent, a fair profit is secured. I found all admit,—both Protestant and Catholic farmers,—that they could afford to eat meat three times a week, and as much milk and butter as were required for their families; or if they chose to live more abstemiously, that they could lay aside a little money. One individual paying 30*s.* an acre for a moderate-sized farm, but of which the land was of the best quality, told me he could afford to eat meat every day. I would have rents and charges upon land such, however, as might enable a man to lay by a little money, without being obliged to do so at the expense of comfort.

The wages of labour here, are usually ten-pence without

diet, or sixpence with diet; but day labourers are not common. The usual practice is to keep farm servants, who get from 3*l.* to 5*l.* a year. I found a good many small cottiers, owning a quarter of an acre or so, and a cabin. These small holdings were under the farmers; and the agreement generally was, to give for their holding four days' labour in the week. This is exorbitantly high; it leaves little more than a hundred days' labour for all that life requires, beyond the produce of a quarter of an acre of potato land. The conacre system is also common here, and in most parts of Fermanagh: and the rent per acre is from 8*l.* to 10*l.*

I now left the neighbourhood of Kesh to visit that famous resort of ignorance and superstition, Loch Dergh, and St. Patrick's Purgatory. From Kesh to Pettigo, a little town about six miles distant, situated at the head of Loch Erne, I passed through an agreeable country, almost all under tillage, but exhibiting abundant evidence of a very backward state of husbandry. It was on the 12th of August that I passed through Pettigo; and I found many of the houses decorated with orange flags; and some zealous Orangemen had erected arches across the road, with emblems and inscriptions, beneath which the pilgrims going to Loch Dergh were obliged to pass.

From Pettigo to Loch Dergh, the distance is about three miles, over bog and mountain. It is a scramble all the way, endeavouring to avoid the marsh and bog land, that cannot, however, be avoided; and one at length thinks of following the example of the pilgrims, who, with bare feet, get over the difficulties of the path with comparative ease. It is said, that no road is constructed here, lest the devotions of the pilgrims should be interrupted by the presence of too many heretics. It proved a very toilsome journey, and it was with much satisfaction that I espied Loch Dergh in the hollow below. Nothing can be more desolate than the landscape around Loch Dergh. Barren heathy hills surround it on all sides, possessing neither form nor elevation, to give the slightest interest to the scene. The lake is considered to be

about nine miles in circumference. As I descended towards the shore of the lake, I could see that the island, which is not quite a mile from the shore, was entirely covered with persons; and on the bank, which I soon reached, I found upwards of two hundred pilgrims waiting to be ferried over. They were generally respectably dressed. Some were sitting, some lying on the grass; some, more impatient, were standing close to the water, waiting the arrival of the ferry-boat; and some, more impatient still, had been warmed into devotion, by the distant view of the holy place, and were already on their knees. They were of all ages; and about three-fourths of the number were women.

At length the ferry-boat arrived from the island, bringing a cargo of those whose penances were concluded; and who did not generally exhibit in their appearance and countenances, that expression of satisfaction which might be expected amongst those, who had just abridged by some thousands of years, the term of their purgatory. The boat having discharged its cargo, a new cargo was quickly found; and before I was permitted to approach the holy place, it was necessary that I should send the letter with which I was provided, to the prior, who might grant or refuse the leave requested.

Meanwhile, until the boat should return with the reply, I took advantage of my opportunities; and improved my acquaintance with some of the pilgrims,—women,—who had returned from the island, and who were resting on the grass before commencing their homeward journey. I chanced fortunately to light upon a group of very communicative persons, who seemed more desirous of telling than of concealing,—with the view, no doubt, of exalting the excellence and advantages of the services in which they had been engaged; and as one reason for telling me some of the secrets of Loch Dergh, they said, that I, being a Protestant, should not be able to see anything on the island. I thought, at first, they meant that the holy doings there would be miraculously concealed from the profane eyes of a heretic: but I found that the hindrances were to be merely human. I was told, that

the moment it was known to the prior, that a stranger was about to visit the island, orders were issued to suspend all devotions: and this I afterwards found to be true. The pilgrims may remain at the station three days, six days, or nine days; and some have even been so far indulged, as to have permission granted them to fast, pray, and do penance for fifteen days. But this is an especial favour. Nothing is eaten or drunk during the whole of the time any one remains on the island, excepting bread and water, or meal and water. Bread and meal can both be purchased on the island; but most of the pilgrims carry their scrip along with them.

I was considerably surprised when, upon my remarking, that with only one meal of bread and water in twenty-four hours, the pilgrims must become faint; the woman with whom I was speaking, said, "O, no! the wine revives us, and gives us strength."

"Wine!" said I; "then you have wine: who pays for the wine?"

"Oh," said she, "it costs nothing; but I see your honour doesn't understand." And then she explained to me the pleasant contrivance by which the pilgrims are regaled with wine, free of expense to them or anybody else. The water of the lake is boiled, and, being blessed, is called wine; and it is given to the faint and greedy pilgrims as hot as they are able to swallow it. One of the women showed me her lips, covered with blisters, from the heat of the "wine" she had drunk; and I no longer doubted of the filip it must give to one's sensations, to have some half-boiling water poured into an empty stomach. I was assured the effect was wonderful; and I well believed it.

The penances consist of constant prayer, fasting, and want of sleep. Before leaving the island, every pilgrim must remain twenty-four hours *in prison*, as they call it. Here they neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep. Not even the renovating "wine" is allowed during these twenty-four hours: and means are also taken to prevent those *in prison* from sleeping. A person is appointed for this purpose; but I was assured that

the office of keeping each other awake is generally kindly performed by each other, from the best motives, I dare say; for the whole efficacy of the penance is nullified by the indulgence of sleep.

The penance of praying around the saints' beds is also practised. These are little circular stone walls, with stones and crosses inside, which are called saints' beds; and around these, on their knees, the pilgrims perform their "stations," repeating at certain spots a certain number of prayers. I inquired whether these revolutions were performed on the bare knees; and the answer was, that this depended upon circumstances.

The sum exacted from the pilgrims, for all the comforts of St. Patrick's Purgatory, including *wine*, amounts to 1s. 4½d.; of which 6½d. is paid for the ferry. If, however, the penitent choose, there is nothing to prevent him from being generous; and it is not improbable that his generosity may be acceptable. Every pilgrim, who is a candidate for the benefits of Loch Dergh, must bring with him a recommendation from the parish priest. I inquired particularly whether the priest encouraged the pilgrimage, or dissuaded from it. The answer was, that he sometimes enjoins it, but most commonly does not influence the applicant one way or another. It is evident that the country priest has no interest in recommending the pilgrimage, since the absence of his parishioner, and the expense of the pilgrimage, will diminish, rather than increase his revenue.

After waiting about an hour, during which the crowd of arriving pilgrims had greatly increased, the boat returned with another freight, and with the permission required. I immediately took my seat in the boat, and watched the extraordinary scene that ensued. The boat is capable of containing from forty to fifty persons; but hundreds press forward to it. No one, however, is admitted without a ticket, previously obtained and paid for; and a thick-set, blustering fellow, and one or two assistants, armed with sticks, stand at the side of the boat, pushing back, by main force, those who are not to enter; and just as roughly thrusting forward those who are

to be favoured. The pilgrims are stowed like so many brutes, in the bottom of the boat, from front to stern—the master shoving and pushing them as he would a drove of pigs; and I believe no one could contemplate the whole scene without being forcibly reminded of the paintings, which all are familiar with, of Charon and his cargo of damned. I was told, by the master of the boat, that strangers are generally ferried over in a separate boat; and that I was particularly honoured by being permitted to go in the same boat with the pilgrims.

When the complement was completed, we shoved off; and the water being rather agitated, we had the advantage of the pilgrims' prayers all the way. As we approached the island, though still at some distance from it, I could see the crowd in motion; but as we approached nearer, the order had gone forth; and all were at rest from their penances and prayers. The moment we reached the island, the pilgrims in the boat were driven on shore—most of them through the water; and I waited a few minutes the arrival of a priest, under whose guidance I visited, and walked over the island. Every spot was crowded; there was not a vacancy of a yard square over the whole surface of the island. All were seated on the ground, with books, and most of the women with rosaries in their hands: but it was evident that all devotions had been ordered to be suspended. No one either moved or spoke. I passed through the chapel, where four priests were seated, and the floor of which was entirely covered with pilgrims seated on it; and I looked into the confessional, which was every bit as crowded: and after perambulating every part of the island, I may venture to say, that there could not have been fewer than two thousand persons upon a spot not three hundred yards long, and not half that breadth.

There used formerly to be a cave, on the present site of St. Patrick's chapel, which, in its day, was even more efficacious than its more modern substitute. This cave was shut up by the order of the Lords Justices, in the year 1630; but in the reign of James II., the spot was again resorted to, and

a new cave was excavated, which in the year 1780 was again closed by order of the prior. The building now erected is the "prison, or chapel," used by the penitents.

The station at Loch Dergh begins on 1st June, and continues till 15th August. The day on which I visited Loch Dergh, twelve boat-loads of pilgrims passed to the island, with upwards of forty persons in each; but supposing forty to be the average number, five hundred persons passed that day. The number of days, from the opening of the station to its conclusion, is seventy-five; and supposing the number of persons passing daily, to be only one half of the number that passed on the 12th of August—viz. two hundred and fifty—the whole number of pilgrims visiting Loch Dergh would amount, during the season, to nearly nineteen thousand; and from the inquiries I made, as well as from this mode of calculation, I have reason to think I am below, rather than above the mark.

I was not allowed a great while to inspect the island: the priest hurried me through, in order, no doubt, that the pilgrims and penitents might resume their devotions; and had I not collected my information from other sources, I could have told the reader very little of what are the doings at St. Patrick's Purgatory.

It is impossible to witness a spectacle like this, without reflections being excited of rather a painful kind. I am not going to write a tirade against Popery, and Catholic superstitions; but when I see thousands assembled at a place like this, far distant from their homes, I cannot but regret the loss of time so fruitlessly spent. Many had travelled from the remotest parts of Cork, Kerry, and Waterford; and must have employed five or six weeks on the pilgrimage, at a season too, when if labour is to be had at all, it is to be had then. July is the period of the hay harvest; and the loss of employment during that month, must have been a loss to many of at least 22s. 6d., to say nothing of the expenses of the journey. The Catholic bishop who, in the year 1830, advertised the holding of a station there, by his lordship in person,

deserved to have had his ears pulled ; and Pope Benedict XIV., who preached a sermon recommending this pilgrimage, would have been well punished by having the *wine* of Loch Dergh served up to his holiness, in place of his own *Lachrymæ Christi*. As for the poor infatuated and ignorant pilgrims, deluded by popes and bishops, they are sincere, I doubt not, in their devotions : and although I am far from thinking that pilgrimage and penance are acceptable in the sight of God, I yet believe that the Deity cannot regard with aversion, any homage that is rendered in sincerity.

In returning from the island, the same scene was enacted as I had witnessed before. I returned with a fleet of pilgrims, whose term had expired ; and although it was then afternoon, another boat-load were still waiting their turn. I walked back to Pettigo, in company with several pilgrims, among whom was a priest, who told me he had come eighty miles to the station, and that he found himself much the better for the discipline. He told me, also, that whatever the weather might be, no one ever caught cold ; and that he never knew of any one suffering from sitting on the damp ground for days, in wet clothes, and with bare feet. I ought to mention, that many of the returning pilgrims were walking with us, and listening to the priest's exordium. There were three or four other priests performing their station on the island. I suppose it is thought necessary, that the station should occasionally be so honoured. When I reached Pettigo I invited my companion, the pilgrim priest, to take part of a leg of mutton which I had bespoken for dinner ; but he excused himself on the ground of his vow, which did not permit him to eat till next day. I only remained an hour at Pettigo, and then proceeded on my journey to Donegal.

CHAPTER XXV.

Journey to Donegal—The Town and its Neighbourhood—High Rents and Poverty—Inver Bay, and Loch Eask—Country between Donegal and Strabane, in Tyrone—Absurdities of Guide Books—Strabane—Lifford—Improved Condition of the Country People—Letterkenny—Trade, Condition, and Neighbouring Landlords—Loch Swilly—Rathmilton—Rathmullin and the Ferry to Fahan—Buncrana—Bad State of Husbandry—Approach to Londonderry.

THE road between Pettigo and Donegal lies through an extremely wild country. The first ten miles of the road lead through a continued bog. Some few struggles for improvement are here and there visible; but they are yet feeble: a wretched house is seen at long intervals, with a few patches of green about it; but there is evidently a want of every thing necessary to improvement, encouragement, capital, and above all, the grand preliminary, facilities of communication. There is nothing to relieve the monotony of this journey, unless it be the numerous little lakes that lie in the hollows; and these are but small relief. A few miles before reaching Donegal, the country improves: more cultivation appears,—the traveller has a stream for his companion; and first the bay, and then the spire of Donegal, announce the vicinity of the town.

Donegal is one of the smallest of towns ; it is scarcely more than a village ; and yet it bears the name of the county. A street is scarcely to be found in it ; but there is a very spacious market-place ; though I should think there are few market-places where less business is done. I noticed several new buildings, however, which, I believe, chiefly owe their existence to a spa, which, during the summer season, attracts a fair share of visitors. There is a tolerable retail trade, but a very insignificant export from Donegal. Five or six cargoes of grain are despatched during the season ; and a new quay has lately been constructed for the benefit of the trade. Lord Arran is proprietor of Donegal ; but I believe his lordship never was there.

But Donegal has some curious remains, particularly an ancient castle, once the residence of the O'Donnells, powerful chieftains, or rather kings, in this part of Ireland. The exterior and general situation of the castle are more interesting than the interior, which contains many rooms, but nothing attractive in sculpture. Were it only, however, for the sake of the view from the windows of a chamber called the banqueting-hall, the castle is worth a visit. There is also, at a short distance from the town, near to the water side, the ruins of an abbey of the fifteenth century. Apart from its situation, the ruin possesses little interest.

The condition of the people in this district is bad. Land is let exorbitantly high. I saw land, about half a mile from the town, which was let at 3*l.* 5*s.* per acre, and which I am certain could not afford a living profit at a higher rent than 2*l.* I saw land also, several miles from Donegal, let at 1*l.* and 18*s.*, which was certainly not worth 10*s.* Farms are generally small, and the farmers are necessitated to live very poorly. All their butter and eggs are sent to market,—potatoes and butter-milk alone being reserved for their diet. The cottiers are still more wretched. I found here a considerable number of cabins locked ; and others, inhabited by only the female part of the family, the husband having gone to harvest work. From all that I could learn, I may state, that the

condition of the occupiers of land in this district has greatly deteriorated within the last fifteen years; and emigration is resorted to by all who are able to avail themselves of it.

The environs of Donegal are pretty. The country is agreeably diversified by knolls and hillocks,—some cultivated, some green, and with a sufficiency of wood interspersed among them; while a very fine mountain outline bounds the horizon to the north. Many beautiful excursions may be made from Donegal: I spent one day in the neighbourhood of Inver bay—which is a beautiful inlet, about six miles west of the town,—and in skirting still farther to the west, the coves and other inlets of the wide bay to which the town of Donegal gives its name: and I spent another day in a visit to Loch Eask, two or three miles from Donegal, and as pretty a lake, on a small scale, as can well be imagined. There is much fine-grown wood about it; and the mountain boundary of the hollow in which it lies, both in form and elevation, is striking and picturesque.

I now left Donegal for Strabane, in Tyrone. The first part of the road runs a little to the right of the pretty lake I have just mentioned, and therefore commands many agreeable views. A few miles farther, we entered what is called the gap of Barnosmore; a mountain defile, much celebrated in the guide-books, which speak of the stupendous height of the mountains, and of the extraordinary natural curiosity which this gap presents. I found merely a defile, amongst hills of moderate elevation; and nothing either wonderful or stupendous. It is a pity that all guide-books should deal so largely in exaggeration. Every thing is wonderful, sublime, stupendous! If it be a hill, that chances to be the subject of the writer's eloquence, it is ready to overwhelm the traveller, who is struck with awe and consternation: if a cavern be spoken of, the affrighted and daring visiter is lost in wonder, and fears the hungry waves are about to engulf him for his temerity. Every rock is gigantic; every headland sublime; every ruin a prodigy; every thing, awful and wonderful; and the traveller, the most courageous of men,

to tempt such frightful dangers ! This is all very silly and ill-judged ; a more chastened taste is wanted in the production of a guide-book worthy of the present age.

After emerging from the hills, I found a pleasant and pretty well cultivated country ; and at the little town of Straorlan, I joined company with the river Fin, which continued to run by the side of the road, almost all the way to Strabane. I everywhere noticed excellent crops : the barley harvest had begun ; and the view over the ripe fields of wheat and oats, and the green meadows by the river side, was rich and refreshing.

Strabane, I found a remarkably neat and pretty-looking town, with several streets, which contain excellent houses and capital shops. In spite of the obstacle offered to improvement, by the refusal of the Marquis of Abercorn to grant good leases, the town advances nevertheless. There is an excellent retail trade, and an improving linen trade, which averages a sale of about 500 pieces weekly. I saw little or nothing of rags in Strabane : there was a respectable look about the people, and every thing else. The poverty-stricken appearance of the Irish towns was fast disappearing. I perceived that I was verging towards the north, and getting among a different race of men. I heard few complaints of want of employment about Strabane : and ten-pence is the usual rate of wages.

The ordinary road to Londonderry lies along the bank of the Foyle, from Strabane. But I did not take this route to Londonderry. I wished to see more of the northern parts of the county of Donegal ; and particularly, I was desirous of seeing Loch Swilly, which is comparatively little visited ; and which, of all the sea bays and inlets of the Irish coast, extends the farthest inland. My route, therefore, lay northward, through Lifford, to Letterkenny, Rathmilton, and Rathmullin.

Lifford, which I passed through only two miles from Strabane, is the county town of Donegal ; and I should think, is the very least of all county towns. In fact, the chief part

of the town is composed of the gaol and court-house. It has no trade, and little market; and is, in fact, but nominally the county town; for although the assizes are held in it, the neighbouring town of Strabane, though in another county, reaps all the benefit of them. Leaving Lifford, I passed through a country abounding in grain and flax. This latter produce had now begun to dispute with corn the possession of the land. Everywhere the people were busily employed taking the flax out of steep, or spreading it on the ground. I suppose I need not tell the reader, that when he travels through a flax country at this season, he will do well to provide himself with a smelling-bottle. The smell of the spread-out flax is most unpleasant; but I could not learn that the odour is unwholesome.

I was greatly struck, in the course of this day's journey, with the very improved appearance of the peasantry. A ragged, rather than a whole coat, was now a rarity: and the clean and tidy appearance of the women and girls, was equally novel, as it was an agreeable sight. The farm-houses, too, were of a superior order; I do not mean merely that they were larger, or better built; this can be accomplished by any improving and considerate landlord. The improvement was visible in things which depend upon the occupant. Most of the houses had inclosures, and clumps of sheltering trees: and the epithet "slovenly" could rarely have found any subject for its application.

As I approached Letterkenny, the head of Loch Swilly was seen to the right,—a small channel of the loch running up almost to the town,—which lies upon an elevated ridge to the left. Letterkenny consists of little more than one long street: but the street contains a number of good shops, which supply the whole eastern and northern parts of Donegal. Considering the remote situation of Letterkenny, there is a considerable export trade in corn. About fifty cargoes, averaging seventy tons, are despatched in a season, making the whole export between three and four thousand tons. The linen trade of the place is at present stationary, and consists

of a weekly sale of about one hundred and fifty pieces : but greatly more flax had been sown than for many years past. The town is the property of Lord Southwell ; and I was glad to hear his lordship everywhere well spoken of. Of other property in this neighbourhood, I am sorry I cannot speak so favourably. The large estates of Colonel Pratt are far too high rented. I visited many of the landholders, and found them poor as poor could be,—not able to pay their rents, and living on a scale of the most moderate comfort. With few exceptions, the farmers could afford nothing for subsistence beyond potatoes and buttermilk. Neither the landlord nor his agent lives here ; the latter merely runs down to collect the rents, leaving a driver to get in the odds and ends as he can.

I recollect, with much pleasure, my journey from Letterkenny, along the shore of Loch Swilly, to Rathmullin. The road does not generally keep close to the shore, but runs along the high ground which bounds the bay on the left, and therefore commands the whole reach of the loch, and the banks, far inland, on both sides. I found on the line of this road a most backward and careless system of husbandry ; fields were entirely overspread with the yellow rag-weed, and with thistles : and sometimes it was difficult to discover the grain, so thickly did these weeds grow in the midst of it. It was blowing a light breeze, and the thistledown was flying all over the fields, seeding everywhere. The banks of Loch Swilly improved in beauty as I journeyed farther down the lake ; cultivation extended close to the high-water-mark line, and abundance of fine timber fringed the margin.

At Rathmilton, which is about half-way between Letterkenny and Rathmullin, I remained a day, that I might make an excursion among the Donegal mountains. I hired a smart pony at Rathmilton, rode to Loch Fearn and Loch Glen, by by-ways, and to the head of one of the northern sea bays, and found my way back by another by-road, which led me past other lakes, and amongst other mountains. I saw much

interesting, and some striking scenery; but so inferior to that which I had found in Cunnemara, that I do not think it necessary to detail the particulars of my ramble. The traveller may find fresh pleasure in each successive mountain ramble; but the details of these have necessarily much sameness in them, and must become wearisome to the reader.

The same agreeable scenery presents itself between Rathmilton and Rathmullin, as I had found higher up: and having reached this latter town, my inquiry was for a boat to ferry me across Loch Swilly. I found that a regular ferry-boat plied from this place to Fahan, on the opposite shore, about three miles distant: and the boatman assured me I should find at Fahan, a choice of jaunting cars to carry me and my portmanteau to Derry. A fine breeze had been sweeping the loch all the morning; but it died away before noon, and we were therefore compelled to use our oars all the way across. There was nothing to regret, however, in the slowness of our progress: for the views were very beautiful; and I was in no hurry. We passed within a hundred yards of the island of Inch, which contains about two thousand acres, and is covered with the finest verdure.

On reaching Fahan, where I had been promised a choice of cars, I found only a few horses, and nothing resembling a vehicle of any kind. The only remedy was, to deposit my portmanteau in a cottage close by, and to walk to a town called Buncrana, situated about four miles farther down Loch Swilly, where I was assured I should find cars in abundance. This necessity was no subject of regret. The road to Buncrana lay close by the water side all the way; and disclosed the whole reach of the lower part of Loch Swilly, as far as the sea. I past some most tempting little coves, where there was deep water, fine sand, and smooth jutting rocks; but I did not pass them all by: in one of them, I refreshed myself by a plunge, and reached Buncrana after a very agreeable walk. This I found a very prettily situated little town; and from the immense water power in its neighbourhood, and its

situation otherwise, I should think it well adapted to the establishment of manufactories. Buncrana was formerly much resorted to for sea-bathing; but a town called Mobile, on Loch Foyle, has now become the fashion, and Buncrana is neglected.

I easily found a car at Buncrana, but no horse; the horse was in the fields, two or three miles distant; but it was yet early; and while the owner fetched the horse, I walked a mile or two into the country. At a farm-house where I called, I saw a dish in preparation for dinner, of so novel a composition as to deserve an inventory of its ingredients. An immense pot of potatoes was emptied into a large wooden bowl. Then began the operation of mashing, which occupied some time, and was done to perfection: next, about a pint of well-boiled onions, together with some of the liquid, was emptied into the bowl, and the mashing was continued; then about a quart of good milk was added; and lastly a large piece of butter. The ingredients were then rapidly stirred for some time with a stick, till the whole appeared like thick cream: and I assure the reader, that the mess was by no means despicable in the sight of a hungry man. This was the first time I had seen the potato cooked, in Ireland, in any other way than *au naturel*; i. e. in their jackets.

The horse had already arrived when I returned to Buncrana; and I was therefore soon on my way to the celebrated city of Londonderry. I never saw worse husbandry than in the country I passed through, between Fahan and Londonderry; or land in a more neglected state. Sea-weed and sand are both to be had here in abundance; but I saw none of either in use. The grass land, and even the corn fields, were literally covered with thistles and rag-weed, which seemed to be treated with as much consideration as if they had been a profitable produce.

The first view of Londonderry is extremely imposing, situated on a mount, at the head of Loch Foyle, its tall cathedral spire rising in the midst; and as it chanced to be then full tide, the view was the more striking. I do not know any

other town in Ireland the approach to which is so imposing. A short drive along the shore of Loch Foyle, brought me to the gateway of the city; and I was soon comfortably established in Brown's Hotel, which has but one fault,—that it is situated about half-way up one of the steepest streets in Europe.

CHAPTER XXVI.

CITY OF LONDONDERRY.

Situation of the City—Descriptive Sketches—The Ramparts—The Cathedral—
 Outskirts of Londonderry—Details respecting the Trade of Londonderry—
 Political and Religious Opinions—The Tithe Bill, and its Rejection—
 Opinions of different Classes—Condition of the People of Londonderry,
 and its Neighbourhood.

THE situation of Londonderry (commonly called Derry all over the north) is the finest, I think, of any town or city in Ireland. Indeed, with the exception of Edinburgh, I do not know any town of the United Kingdom so well situated as Londonderry. The city, I have already said, stands upon a mount, from all sides of which there is a rapid descent.

The river Foyle, a fine broad river, makes a noble sweep on one side of the town, and expands immediately below it into a wide estuary, which terminates in the broad waters of Loch Foyle. On all sides of the town is seen a succession of deep valleys, and corresponding heights, exhibiting every attraction which wood and cultivation can bestow. Up the river and down the estuary on both sides, the slopes and heights are adorned by handsome villas; and in fact I do not know any thing that is wanting to render the situation of Londonderry finer, or its environs more attractive.

And the town is worthy of its situation. Even if it possessed no advantage over other towns, in point of situation, it would be the handsomest place of its size in Ireland. I do not generally make a practice of minutely describing towns; but although not minutely, I must give some general description of Londonderry. Like all walled towns, Londonderry, within the walls, is somewhat crowded: that is to say, there is no vacant space; but space enough has been left for the streets, which are uniformly wide. In the centre of the town, too, is an open space, called a square,—but which is not a square,—with the Corporation Hall in the centre of it; and from this centre, the four main streets diverge at right angles, terminating in gateways. Besides these four main streets, there are many other lesser streets and lanes; but the houses are throughout well built, and there is considerable architectural effect in the perspective view of the streets. The city is surrounded by a rampart, after the manner of the Continental towns, with a fine broad walk round it, from which, on two sides of the town at least, there are delightful views over the beautiful surrounding country, and down the estuary to Loch Swilly.

The cathedral stands on the highest part of the mount on which the city is built, retiring a little way from the main street. It is a large and handsome Gothic structure, with a remarkably pretty spire, and a neat enough interior, where are displayed the colours taken at the siege of Derry. Here, also, a very handsome and well-deserved monument has been erected to the memory of the late Bishop Knox. I ascended to the summit of the tower, as I always do in every strange town; and would advise the traveller here to follow my example; for it is not often that he will have an opportunity of seeing a richer or more varied prospect.

It may easily be supposed, that the individual who shows the cathedral of Derry, and the trophies suspended above the altar, and who points out from the tower the spots rendered memorable by the siege, should be a strong Orangeman. Bitterly he lamented that the good old days were gone by, when

Orangemen might show their colours. The 12th of August, he said, had passed away with only the firing of a few guns ; —these were poor doings for Derry. It was with great pride he pointed out, on the rampart below, the handsome monument erected to the memory of the Rev. George Walker, whose part in the defence of the city, in 1689, is well known to the reader. It is a fluted column, on a pedestal, and surmounted by a statue of that very heroic individual.

Close to the cathedral stands a very handsome court-house, with a fine portico : and excepting the gaol, there is no other handsome building ; though several of the public edifices without the walls, for charitable purposes, are extensive, and not without claims to a respectable exterior. These buildings are numerous. There is a lunatic asylum, a poor-house, and hospital ; a penitentiary, and a mendicity society ; all, as far as I could learn, under good management.

But the city of Londonderry, although confined within walls, has extended itself in all directions beyond them : and the houses of the suburbs vie in many places with those of the older city. Towards the quay, and to the left of the city, many streets have been but recently built ; and although the wants of the lower classes have raised up some streets of an inferior description, they do not consist of mud cabins, or rarely of thatched cottages. I must not omit, in this brief descriptive notice of Londonderry, the very handsome wooden bridge across the Foyle. This bridge is one thousand and sixty-eight feet in length, and forty in width ; and has a draw-bridge in the centre of it, to allow the passage of vessels up and down the river. Having now sufficiently described the city of Londonderry, let me proceed to other, and perhaps more important, matters.

Londonderry is in a thriving condition, in every department of trade, and affords a thousand obvious evidences of improvement, even in its general aspect. But I will descend a little into detail, as Londonderry is a place of some importance.

In 1829, 574 vessels, measuring 48,912 tons, cleared in-

wards, coastwise; and in the same year, there cleared out, coastwise, 508 vessels, measuring 43,347 tons. In 1830, the tonnage coastwise, inwards, was 51,088 tons; and outwards, 42,986 tons. In 1831, the tonnage coastwise, inwards, was 58,955 tons, and outwards, 44,351 tons. In 1832, the tonnage coastwise, inwards, was 62,032 tons; and outwards, 50,303 tons; and in 1833, the tonnage coastwise, inwards, was 63,879 tons; and outwards, 52,952 tons. The tonnage inwards, coastwise, has therefore increased during the last five years, nearly 15,000 tons; and outwards, it has increased nearly 10,000 tons. I need scarcely say, that *coastwise*, includes the ports of Great Britain.

In foreign trade, the tonnage in and out has also increased. In 1829, it was 7537 in, and 3865 out. In 1830, it was 10,989 in, and 2689 out. In 1831, it was 6286 in, and 1989 out. In 1832, it was 10,310 in, and 4341 out; and in 1833, it was 11,294 in, and 6845 out. Tonnage to the amount of 8650 tons, also cleared out in ballast in 1833.

During the last two years, the tonnage of registered vessels belonging to the port, has increased one-fourth.

It is evident, therefore, even without entering into details, that both the import and the export trade must be greatly on the increase. In grain, this is especially the case: but the precise export of grain I was not able to ascertain. This, I was informed, was owing to some new mode in which the custom books are kept, which do not now exhibit, as they used to do, at a glance, the whole annual exports. This order is not universally acted upon; since at Sligo, at Cork, Limerick, and elsewhere, I found no difficulty in obtaining these returns. I must be allowed to observe, however, that I think the order an injudicious one. The expense was a mere trifle; and it was certainly worth its amount to government, to whom it should be at all times possible to obtain, at a moment's notice, an accurate return of the trade of the empire. I am justified, however, in asserting that the export of grain is constantly increasing, though the proportions of the different kinds of grain exported change. Oats used some

years ago to be the chief export : but the export of oats has decreased, and that of wheat has increased in proportion.

The butter export trade has also increased. From the 1st of June, 1830, to the same date in 1831, the number of firkins exported, was 24,600. The following year, the export was 29,345 firkins ; the year following, it rose to 40,276 firkins ; and in the year ending June, 1834, it was 39,399 firkins. This statement does not show the whole increase : for since the law which rendered the inspection of butter necessary, was repealed, a large quantity has been sent in corks ; and this kind of export has greatly increased within the last few years. I found everywhere a strong impression in favour of the old law : it is generally understood that the quality of butter has greatly deteriorated in consequence of its repeal : for every one is now at liberty to taste for himself ; and the frequent perforations necessarily injure the butter.

There has also been a large increase in the import of flax seed into this port, from foreign parts. In the year ending July 1833, 6322 quarters were imported ; in the year ending July 1834, 8757 quarters were imported. The coastwise importation had increased in a still greater proportion.

The linen trade is not the prosperous trade it once was ; but there is no doubt that it is now steadily advancing. The number of webs sold in the Linen Hall, from 1st of May, 1831, to 1st of May, 1832, was 16,832. The number sold for the year ending May, 1833, was 17,445. And for the year ending with May in the present year, 18,694. No kind of trade is so useful to Ireland as the linen trade ; it employs the agriculturist, the manufacturer, and the merchant ; and particularly, it calls labour into employment, which would not be otherwise in demand,—the labour of children and women ; and that, too, at times and seasons when labour is particularly abundant.

Londonderry has no manufactories, except breweries, distilleries, and a few tan-yards. I think I am entitled, from the statements already made, to say of Londonderry that it is an advancing town.

In both religious and political opinion, the population of Londonderry is greatly divided. In religious opinion, the population is supposed to stand thus :—first in numbers come the Presbyterians ; then, the Roman Catholics ; next, the Church of Ireland ; then, the dissenters from the Presbyterians ; then the Methodists ; then, Socinians ; then, Baptists. There is altogether a very large preponderance of Protestants in the population of Londonderry. All the upper classes, and the great body of the middle classes, including the shopkeepers, are Protestants.

Although high Protestant, I did not find the population so exclusively high Tory as I expected. There are, indeed, many ultras, and many staunch Orangemen ; but there is also a large sprinkling of moderate liberalism,—of those who are inclined to support the present (now the late) government in any system of moderation and impartiality. On the church reform question, for example, I found an almost general admission of the necessity of reform,—rejecting, however, the doctrine, that any part of the church property should be available to state purposes.

I was at Derry when the accounts were received of the rejection of the Tithe Bill by the House of Lords ; and I need scarcely say, that I heard very opposite opinions expressed respecting the fate of that bill. I should say, that the course pursued by the House of Lords had many supporters in Londonderry ; but let me add, that upon a question like this, and upon the consequences of the rejection of the measure, the people of this part of Ireland are incompetent to form any correct opinion. Irishmen are generally nearly as ignorant of the real condition of Ireland as Englishmen are. The people of the north of Ireland, know that there is no great difficulty in collecting tithes in their districts ; but they know absolutely nothing of Ireland elsewhere ; and applying to the whole country their own very limited knowledge, their judgment is entirely erroneous. I heard many, however, in Londonderry, take other and more rational views, questioning, indeed,—as every rational person must,—the justice of

making a present to landlords, at the expense of the clergy, and of benefiting most the class least entitled to benefit; but favourable, notwithstanding, to some measure of adjustment, by which the clergy would not be left,—as the Lords have left them,—to starve. The statement so often and so confidently made, in parliament and out of it, that the rejection of the bill by the Lords was acceptable to the clergy of Ireland, must be received with great caution. As individuals personally interested, the clergy of the north of Ireland had no cause to deprecate the rejection of the bill, because its rejection could not subject them to any inconvenience; and yet in the counties of Londonderry, Antrim, Armagh, and Down, I heard clergymen, who had no difficulty in collecting their tithes, expressing an opinion decidedly condemnatory of the course pursued by the Lords.

I will take this opportunity of stating, what I think is the opinion entertained respecting the Tithe Bill (previous to the alteration effected by Mr. O'Connell's amendment) by the different classes whom it concerns. Of these, I think the clergy were the most favourable to it. They were not, indeed, satisfied of the justice of so large a reduction from their incomes; but they felt the uncertainty of their position; and I think, as a body, were not disinclined to accept of the certainty which the bill offered. There is no doubt, in point of fact, that their actual incomes would benefit by the bill, in all those parts of Ireland where agitation existed,—and perhaps even everywhere.

I have found land-owners divided in opinion. Those who were in a condition to take advantage of the boons offered by the bill, were favourable to it; while others objected to it, either because they were so circumstanced as not to be able to gain any advantage by it; or, because they were fearful that, when tithe was converted into a land-tax, difficulties might arise in the collection of rent.

Let us suppose the following case:—A land-owner, whose estate was liable to 100*l.* composition rent, might have had it reduced to a rent charge of 80*l.* per annum; and where

the value of the land was at twenty years' purchase, the composition might be redeemed, at sixteen years' purchase, for 1,600*l.* (which he could borrow from the board of works, at a low interest), and thus relieve his estate from 100*l.* of composition chargeable on it. The board of works had the power of lending money at four per cent. interest, and a repayment of the principal at four per cent. : so that a land-owner, borrowing 1,600*l.*, would have had only to pay 64*l.* interest, annually, instead of 100*l.* land-tax, and with power to pay off the principal, by instalments, at four per cent. Every one therefore must see that the bill was highly favourable to the land-owner—one would say too favourable, were it not that, without the advantages offered to that class, the tithe question could not have been eventually and effectually set at rest.

I should say, of the occupiers of land, that they were not pleased with the bill. The great mass of the landholders, throughout the south and west, had caught at the expression of Mr. (now Lord) Stanley, that tithe was to be extinguished : and did not like any legislation upon the subject of tithe, which they considered a re-enaction of it ; and they also felt a conviction that all relief, taken from them, would be only a benefit to the landlord, who would consider himself entitled to a corresponding addition to his rent : and there is no doubt that so long as the competition for land exists, as it does at this moment, it will thwart any measure intended for the relief of the tenant.

I found the condition of the lower orders, in Londonderry and its neighbourhood, better, upon the whole, than I had yet anywhere seen it. There is not, indeed, constant employment for all ; but the labour market cannot be greatly overstocked, where wages are at 7*s.* per week : if it were so, wages would speedily come down to the labour-rate in other parts of Ireland. In the south and west, I have frequently asked this question—"if I wanted fifty men, on constant employment, what would they hire for?" and the answer generally was, 10*d.* ; because supposing from my question,

which was always addressed to the labouring classes, that I really wanted labourers, they asked 2*d.* above the usual price. Here, in Londonderry, on putting the same question, the answer was 1*s.* 4*d.* or 1*s.* 6*d.*, sufficiently proving that labour was more in demand, and that higher wages were paid.

CHAPTER XXVII.

How far is the condition of the Irish People referrible to Catholicism?—The True Cause of Prosperity of the Protestant Districts—Deterioration of the Agriculturists—Journey to Coleraine—Newton Limovaddy—London Companies—Condition of the People—The Advantages of the Linen Trade—State of this Trade—Trade of Coleraine—Political Opinions—Projected Improvements—Port Rush, and Port Stewart.

I HAVE already said, that the houses of the labouring classes in the neighbourhood of Londonderry are of a superior order : and judging, also, by dress and general appearance, and by the interior of the houses, I should say, that superior comforts are diffused among the people of these districts. This observation will apply to the whole of the northern counties,—to Londonderry, Antrim, Armagh, Down, and to the towns which they contain : and I think I cannot find a more fitting place than the present, for making some observations upon an assertion, which all, who have read any thing on the condition of Ireland, must have heard repeated a hundred times. The statement to which I allude, is this : that we are at once able to distinguish between the Catholic and the Protestant parts of Ireland, by the superior condition of the Protestant people—the greater respectability of their appearance—their better habitations—and generally higher state of civilization. Now, I unequivocally admit that, with few exceptions, there is a perceptible, often a marked, difference in the appearance of a Catholic and of a Protestant district, in Ireland ; but I deny that this is owing, *in any great degree*, to the people being Protestants. I say, in any great degree, because I admit that the Protestant

religion, being more favourable to the diffusion of knowledge, and to intellectual cultivation, than the Roman Catholic faith, it will, in some degree, affect, favourably, the condition of a people. But I repeat that Protestantism is not the chief cause of the differences to which I have alluded. "Look," says a favourite writer, "at a church, and a mass congregation, and you will be at no loss to distinguish the one from the other." Truly, no. They are very easily distinguished. But let me ask who, throughout every part of Ireland (excepting Ulster), are the individuals composing the church congregation? Are they not the gentry, and some few of the more substantial farmers? It is not, therefore, at all difficult to distinguish between the Catholic and Protestant population; for this is but distinguishing between the upper and the lower ranks. But to come more directly to the assertion that a Protestant district has quite another aspect from a Catholic district, which I admit to be a fact, I think it no difficult matter to find reasons for this, more influential in their results, than the profession of Protestantism.

Did it never occur to those who have observed a fact, and instantly seized upon the *least* influential of all its causes, as its *sole* origin, that the rate of wages might make some difference in the condition and aspect of a people? The Catholic peasantry of Clare, Kerry, Galway, Mayo; and of, indeed, all the south, west, and much of the centre, have not employment at all during half the year,—or, in other words, one half of them have no constant employment; and when they are employed, what is their rate of wages? Eight-pence, and even sixpence without diet. The Protestant population of Derry, Antrim, Armagh, and Down, have, if not full employment, at least greatly more constant employment than their Catholic brethren of the south; and the rate of wages is from 10d. to 1s. 4d.; the difference is at the least 4d.; and does 4d. per day make no difference in the condition of an Irish labourer? But the most overwhelming argument for those who would ascribe all the difference in condition to Protestantism is, that not the Protestants only *but the Catholics*

also in these Protestant counties, are in a better condition. How should this be? The mass of the lower classes in the towns, as well as the great majority of the country labourers in the districts called Protestant, are Catholics; but they are not in the condition of their Catholic countrymen of Munster and Connaught. We do not see them with tattered coats and bare feet; and why? Because they are generally in employment, and receive higher wages. I have seen in Catholic districts, Catholic tenantry and Catholic labourers, comfortable where they had the good fortune to be placed in favourable circumstances,—as on the estates of Mr. Tighe of Woodstock, Mr. Power of Kilfane, Lord Arden, Mr. Stanley, Lord Palmerston, Lord Lansdowne, &c.; and I have seen Protestants as miserable as any Catholics could be found,—as on the estate of Lord Donoughmore and others.

Nor must I omit another source of superior comfort throughout the north,—the growth and manufacture of flax, which, although of late years in a depressed condition, has never been extinct, and has always contributed in some degree to increase the comforts of the lower classes.

But another most important cause of the superior condition of the north of Ireland, remains to be mentioned: and this, which I am about to mention, bears not only upon the superior habits of the lower classes, but upon the superior condition of all classes,—the landowner, the farmer, the merchant, the manufacturer, the tradesman, the artizan. The people of the north are of Scotch descent; and there cannot be found, throughout the north, any of that improvidence which is so detrimental to the condition of society, in the south and west. The landlord is not a distressed man, and therefore does not grasp at such exorbitant rents. The farmer can save a little money, and is therefore able to give some employment. The competition for land is less, because there is more employment, and more resources for the lower orders. The manufacturer and merchant are not men of expense, extravagance, and display; they mind their business, accumulate capital, employ it in wholesome enterprise, and give employ-

ment. What has Protestantism to do with this? The landowners, merchants, manufactures, are indeed Protestants: but so are the great majority of landowners throughout Ireland; and so are the merchants, and many of the tradesmen of Dublin, and the merchants of Cork, and Waterford, and many other places. But the merchant of Cork is hunting, while he at Belfast is at his desk; and the tradesman of Dublin is in his jaunting car, and entertaining company at his box at Kingston, while the tradesman of Derry, Coleraine, or Belfast, is minding his shop.

The great and essential distinction between the north, and every other part of Ireland, is the difference in the character of the people. This it is (in conjunction with the peculiar favour and protection which the north of Ireland has enjoyed from the state) that has made the north what it is. This has accumulated capital, and employed it in the many investments, which have in their turn given employment to the people,—raising the rate of wages; and given to the aspect of both the Protestant and Catholic population, that superiority, which has unthinkingly been attributed solely to the profession of Protestantism.

I have had some experience of Catholic countries; and I have found nothing to warrant the belief, that misery is always the accompaniment of Popery; or that, in order to be provident, and industrious, and happy, one must be a Protestant. There is no lack of industry among the countrymen of Biscay, or Catalonia; or amongst the peasantry of the Tyrol. Bavaria, and the north of Italy, offer evidences of comfort and prosperity; and I never heard that the Roman Catholics of Canada were any way behind their Protestant neighbours.

Londonderry I should think a pleasant town to live in: the only drawback is, the steepness of its streets; but the ramparts form an agreeable substitute for level streets, and are the usual promenade of the inhabitants. There are numerous walks also, on all sides of the town, by lake and river; and magnificent views from many of the surrounding heights. Londonderry possesses other advantages. A steamer leaves

the quay twice a day for Mobile, a much-frequented watering-place, seventeen miles from the city, on the bank of Loch Swilly; and twice a week, there is a steam vessel to Port Rush, and Port Stewart, two other thriving watering-places on the north coast; and once every week, a steam vessel visits the Giant's Causeway. Steam vessels also ply regularly to Glasgow, Liverpool, Dublin, and Belfast. The general trade of Londonderry has been, of course, much benefited by the facilities of steam navigation; the great dealers indeed have been injured, but the small dealers, and the public at large, have been benefited.

Land round Londonderry is not excessively high let. In the neighbourhood of the town, it is chiefly bishop's land; and town lands are let about 3*l.* per acre. Farther from the town, land is also comparatively moderate. Landlords, as I have already said, are not distressed men; and there is less competition for land, because there is more employment. The reader also doubtless knows, that a great part of the county is the property of the London Companies, who are in general good landlords where they have the direct control. But I shall have occasion to speak more of these hereafter.

Notwithstanding, however, that the occupiers of land are in a better condition in this part of Ireland than in the south and west, their condition, from all that I could learn, has deteriorated within the last fifteen years. This is easily explained. The linen trade, although again advancing, and for many reasons likely to evince a continued improvement, has for some years past been depressed. In the prosperous days of the linen trade, every member of every landholder's family was employed; and by their united gains, many comforts were purchased. The condition of the agricultural classes has therefore deteriorated; but this deterioration is traceable to a specific cause.

It is a singular fact, that in such a town as Londonderry, there should be no circulating or public library. Several attempts to establish these have failed; and I could not even learn that any private book society existed.

I now quitted Londonderry, and took the road to Coleraine.

Immediately after passing the handsome wooden bridge, which I have already mentioned, the road ascends a very steep hill, from which Londonderry shows itself to very great advantage, especially if it chance to be full tide. Between Londonderry and Newton Limovaddy, I passed through a fruitful corn country; and noticed throughout, a very improved state of things amongst the people and their habitations. I scarcely saw a mud cabin between Londonderry and Coleraine. I cannot, however, say so much for the state of husbandry. The rag-weed and the thistle were still predominant over the grass fields, and painfully conspicuous among the fine crops of wheat and oats that were ripe for the sickle.

All the way to Newton Limovaddy, the road keeps near to the right bank of Loch Foyle: but there is nothing very striking in the shores of Loch Foyle, which, on this side, are low, and neither beautiful nor picturesque. Newton Limovaddy is very agreeably situated; and after a season of depression, is again a rising town. There are many rich people in this town, who made their fortunes in the linen trade, at a time when Newton Limovaddy was one of its most flourishing marts. Between Newton Limovaddy and Coleraine, there is not much to interest the traveller. I passed through rather a poor country,—a considerable portion of it bog, and unreclaimed land. I have already said, that a great part of this county is owned by the London Companies. Of the estates of the companies, four are held directly under the companies by the occupiers, and the rest of them under leaseholders: five of the leaseholders hold in perpetuity from the companies, and the remaining three estates yet on lease, will shortly lapse. Where the companies are the direct landlords, there is no complaint of them: their lands are upon the whole reasonably let; and they appear to have been fortunate also, in the appointment of agents. The farms held under the companies are generally small,—very many not exceeding five or six acres. The land, however, of the best quality, is not generally let higher than 1*l.* per acre: and tenants I

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think, may, with ordinary industry, be comfortable. Amongst these small farmers, spade husbandry is not sufficiently employed; and many keep horses, for which a cow might be profitably substituted. Farming all over these parts, is certainly not in the improved condition which one might expect.

A considerable number of cotters are found in these districts: these are established by the larger farmers, as labourers, and have generally a house, a cow's grass, and a few roods of garden ground, for which holding, they pay on an average 5*l*. Here, as in other places, it is a common practice for persons undertaking to manure land, to get the produce of that which they manure rent-free. If this, however, be covenanted for in the immediate vicinity of a town, sixpence per perch is paid, for land to be so manured. I could not learn that the con-acre system is at all practised in this county.

The observation which I made respecting the condition of the occupiers of land in the neighbourhood of Londonderry, may be applied also to the country around Coleraine, and indeed to all those districts which have been, and are still, less or more, the linen trade districts. There may appear an inconsistency in the statement, but there is none in reality, that the condition of the districts has declined, although their export trade has greatly increased. But there is a wide difference between an export trade, and a linen trade. The former is merely a value received for a crop severed from the ground, and goes to pay rent to the landlord, who spends the whole, or the greater part of it, out of the country where the crop was grown. The linen trade is a domestic trade, diffusing its benefits, by numerous ramifications, over the district where it flourishes. Flax, if sold, and exported like wheat, would be no more profitable than it: but linen is not a produce only, but a manufacture also; and in pulling, steeping, drying, preparing, spinning, weaving, bleaching, &c., so many channels are opened, into which the value is thrown.

When I speak of the present condition of Coleraine with reference to the linen trade, I speak of the whole linen districts, and even of the province of Ulster. The amount of linen brought to market, is, at present, one-third less than it was in 1825. An impulse had been communicated to the linen trade, some short time back, by the publication of the American tariff; but it again received a check, by the money project of General Jackson, and the unsettled condition of the American money market. I found little doubt entertained, however, that this cloud would pass away, and that the impetus the trade had received would continue to affect it. When I was in this district, a small decline in price had taken place; but there was no heaviness in the market. If more had been brought to market, more would have been sold. To state the quantity of linen sold at Coleraine, would afford no just idea of the state and extent of the trade. The merchants go to all the towns where there is a market, and send their purchases to the bleach-field, whence, after being prepared, the linen is sent to Belfast, which is the point of export for the whole linen districts. Greatly more flax has been sown this year than on any preceding year, for many years past; and the belief that the trade is reviving, with the prospect of permanent improvement, I found general amongst those who had the best opportunities of forming a correct judgment.

The export of grain from Coleraine is considerable; and it is steadily increasing; as are also the exports of butter and provisions. The construction of a harbour at Port Rush, when completed, will be of great service to the trade of Coleraine; for in winter season, the difficulties and dangers of passing the bar, and coming up to the quay at Coleraine, are great.

Coleraine may be fairly considered a rising town; although just at the time when I visited it, there was a slight depression in the linen trade. At present the town derives some benefit from the land carriage of linen to Belfast; as the carts

that carry the linen, bring back barilla, pot-ash, &c. ; but in a short time this mode of conveyance will not be in use, a steam vessel being now in course of building, intended to ply between Coleraine and Liverpool. I need scarcely say, that this will affect very favourably both the export and import trade of the town. The only manufactures of Coleraine, are soap-boiling and tanning.

Generally speaking, there is employment for labour in and about Coleraine; and wages in the country average about eleven-pence.

The political opinions of the people of this town and neighbourhood, are for the most part Conservative. Indeed, throughout the county of Londonderry, almost every landowner of any considerable extent is a Tory. In the town of Coleraine, indeed, there are a considerable number of Repealers; and many Liberals, who stop short at repeal. I found a strong disposition in Coleraine, to support the government in any system of liberal and impartial policy. Literature is at a low ebb in Coleraine. Several attempts at establishing a library have failed; and I believe no private reading association exists. From fifty to sixty monthly periodicals are taken in by the principal bookseller of Coleraine, which are chiefly circulated amongst the clergy and country gentlemen.

The town of Coleraine is not a pretty or good-looking town. One good street is all it boasts; and even this street is disfigured by many poor houses. A great part of the town is held under the Irish Society in perpetuity; but notwithstanding this drawback, many signs of improvement are visible. Of late years, the town has considerably increased in size, and the character of the buildings has greatly improved. The suburbs are extensive; and in walking through them, I saw no indications of great wretchedness and poverty.

Much might be done for Coleraine. A grant to improve the harbour of Port Rush, would greatly facilitate the completion of that work, and would eventually confer important

benefits on these districts. Connected with this work, a railway from the town to Port Rush, a distance of only a few miles, would be of essential service. But perhaps the most important of all the improvements which could be devised for the benefit of these districts, would be the opening of the navigation of the river Bann, from Coleraine to Loch Neagh. I believe only twelve miles of this river, the twelve miles nearest to Loch Neagh, are not already navigable; and were this work effected, a direct inland navigation would be opened, between the whole of the interior districts of Londonderry and Antrim and Belfast; there being already a navigable communication between Belfast and Loch Neagh. It only requires that one should glance at the map, in order to perceive the immense advantages of such a work.

The salmon fisheries of the river Bann, at Coleraine, are important, and afford a very considerable export: three and four hundred salmon have been more than once taken at a haul; and it is said, that on one occasion, the enormous number of 1,500 were taken at a haul. It is certain, that 750 fish were taken on one day, in July 1824, the weight of which reached two tons.

I have already mentioned Port Rush. This, and Port-Stewart, are much frequented as bathing-places, by the people of this part of Ireland: the latter is a remarkably pretty spot and a very flourishing one. It contains many good houses, finely sheltered; and the sea-beach is all that bathers could desire. Port Rush reminded me considerably of Beiretz,—a little bathing-place near Bayonne. It is situated on, and under a promontory, which affords a fine healthful promenade; and a most extensive view of the northern coast, including all the headlands around the Giant's Causeway to the east, and the whole reach of coast to the west, as far as the entrance to Loch Foyle, and the opposite point, called Innishoanhead,—a district famous alike for whiskey and disturbance. The harbour is nearly completed; and a break-water is now in course of being constructed, which, when

finished, will afford perfect protection against the west winds, which prevail during the greater part of the year. Both Port Stewart and Port Rush were full of company when I visited them ; and I found house-rent here, as at all the Irish watering and bathing-places, exorbitantly dear.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Excursion to the Giant's Causeway—Dunluce Castle—the Causeway—the Caves—the Promontories—Estimate of the Scenery—Ballycastle—Journey to Antrim—Difference in Expenses in the North and South—Other Differences—Ballymoney, and Ballymena—Antrim and its Round Tower—Shanes Castle—Loch Neagh.

BEFORE proceeding on my journey through Antrim towards Belfast, I of course dedicated a couple of days to the Giant's Causeway and its neighbourhood. One may either go direct from Coleraine to the Causeway, or coastwise, by the ruins of Dunluce Castle. Visiting the Causeway from Coleraine, the latter is, of course, the road to choose. I found nothing particularly interesting between Coleraine and Dunluce Castle, except the view of the ocean, which is always pregnant with associations and recollections. It is not often that the traveller in Ireland sees the ocean, even although he visits many places on the sea-coast; for the coast is so indented with bays and inlets, that the roads do not, and cannot skirt the open sea; and the towns are all situated at the head of the bays, or towards the mouths of rivers. Donegal, and Londonderry, and Sligo, and Westport, and Roundstone, and Galway, and Bantry, and Limerick, and Cork, and Wexford, and Belfast, all lie within the bays, or far up the estuaries; and therefore, though glimpses of the ocean are caught

beyond the entrance to the bays, I think I had only twice seen the open sea,—once at Youghall, and again at Valentia isle.

Dunluce Castle has the reputation of being one of the finest ruins in Ireland. I cannot understand how this reputation has been acquired. The situation only of the ruin is fine : if it stood inland, on a level field, the ruin would scarcely attract a glance, unless perhaps on account of its extent ; for, as a building, there is nothing fine or beautiful about it. The *tout-ensemble*, however, is very imposing. The ruins occupy the summit of a detached rock, which is perpendicular towards the sea, above which it rises about a hundred feet ; and it is separated from the main land by a chasm about twenty feet across. The only mode of entrance to the castle, is by a narrow path that runs along the summit of an arch, which connects the castle with the main land. There was formerly another parallel arch, and some kind of flooring connected the two ; but one arch only remains ; and the footway across, being scarcely eighteen inches wide, and the chasm underneath being of considerable depth, some little nerve is required by the explorer. The inside of the ruin presents nothing either curious or beautiful : there are a number of apartments ; but the recompence for crossing the arch, is the view of the sea underneath the projecting ruin ; and the sound of the waves rushing into the cavern which penetrates the whole rock upon which the castle is built, and which may be entered on the land side. Many crumbling remains of buildings also stand on the main land, close to the castle ; and I think it is from the window of one of the ruined apartments, a little to the west, that the best view of Dunluce Castle is to be obtained.

From Dunluce, the road to the Causeway skirts the sea for a mile or two, and then diverges a little, to the small village called Bush Mills ; an improving little place, the property of Sir Francis M'Naughten, who has the character of being an improving landlord. From Bush Mills, about another mile brings one to a place called Rock-heads, where vehicles and

horses must be left, and a guide and boat hired. To see the Causeway, and the neighbouring promontories, to advantage, a boat is absolutely requisite; and the expense of a boat, and its crew, is fixed at 12s. The guide generally receives 5s. But, in order that the scenery of this part of Ireland—not merely the Causeway, but the coast to the eastward,—be properly seen, the traveller must remain one day at Bush Mills, as head-quarters for the Causeway, and the next day must hire a boat to take him along the coast, as far at least as Fair-head. This was the plan which I adopted.

Having put myself under the care of the guide, I was first conducted to the caves, one of which is entered by land, the other only by water. I was pleased with both of these, although I think caves generally disappoint one. There is certainly something closely bordering on the sublime, in the gloominess and solitariness of a great sea cavern, and in the rush and deep thunder of the resistless waves that bound into it. The cave, which is accessible only by water, is said to be of unknown magnitude: it is certain that the rush of the waters is heard far beyond the point to which the boat is able to penetrate. Upon the whole, I preferred the former of these caverns, although the other very far exceeds it in dimensions.

I was now conducted, by a path underneath the cliffs, to the Giant's Causeway; and, after walking about half a mile, the guide stopped, and pointing a few hundred yards forward, said, "There is the Giant's Causeway." I confess I was disappointed. The guide seemed to anticipate this; and although I made no observation, he said, One required to step on the Causeway, in order to appreciate its wonders. I did so, and was still disappointed. I had heard of the Giant's Causeway from my earliest childhood; I had read in the guide-books of the sublimity of this wonderful spectacle; and although I had long ago learned to appreciate the bombast of a guide-book, the very name—Giant's Causeway—seemed inseparably connected with scenes of the sublimest character. Imagination had pictured a far-spread congregation of rocks,

broad enough for giants to plant their footsteps on ; and wide enough asunder, for the stride of a giant. My picture was dissolved in a moment. I saw beneath my feet, and around me, an exceedingly curious spectacle ; I trod upon a polygonal pavement,—a sort of platform, composed of the level heads of pillars, septagonal, pentagonal, and hexagonal, and closely fitting into each other ; and, looking around me, I saw the pillars standing upright from this platform, forming distinct tiers, and in some places, clusters of columns, and colonnades, measuring from twenty to thirty-three feet in height, and resembling, in some places, a honeycomb, and in others, the pipes of an immense organ. Now, I repeat, that nothing can be more curious than this, and that to the geologist few things are likely to be more interesting ; but as for grandeur or sublimity, I saw nothing of either.

From the Causeway, I was conducted to Pleaskin,—a singular and singularly beautiful promontory, finely varied in colour, and exhibiting its regular tiers of pillars, one over the other, separated, however, from each other by dark irregular rock, and altogether measuring in height 154 feet.

My next excursion was by water, from the Causeway, to Ballycastle and Fair-head. For this excursion, calm weather is required ; for it is necessary to keep near to the rocks in some places ; and with every wind but a south wind, the swell of the sea along this coast is great, and might chance to be dangerous. Eastward from the Causeway, the first promontory we passed was Bengore,—three hundred and thirty feet high ; but much inferior to the lower promontory of Pleaskin, in the beauty of its formation ; and certainly not sufficiently elevated to awaken the faintest impression of sublimity.

The next object of interest, is the swinging bridge of Carric-a-Rede. There is here a headland, or rather, an insulated rock, projecting some distance into the sea, on which a small cottage stands, used by the fishermen during the salmon season. Between this rock and the main land there is a chasm, about sixty feet wide ; and here, a bridge of ropes has been thrown across. Two ropes are stretched from

rock to rock, parallel to each other ; across these, twelve-inch-wide planks are laid, and properly secured ; a slender rope elevated about three feet, runs parallel with the bridge ; and as the adventurous person crosses the bridge, this slender rope serves him to slide his hand over. The height of the bridge, above the water, is about eighty feet.

Before proceeding to Fair-head, we stopped at the little town of Ballycastle, which I reached about five hours after leaving the Causeway. Here I had some refreshment ; and there being still four or five hours of the day left, I visited Fair-head the same evening.

Fair-head, or Benmore, is the highest promontory on the coast. It is about five hundred and fifty feet above the level of the sea ; and is composed of basaltic pillars, some of them two hundred feet high ; while below, a vast congregation of masses of rock extends into the sea. This is certainly the finest object along the whole line of coast ; and if any where here the sublime is to be found, it is certainly at Fair-head. Amongst other things, to which the traveller is conducted, is " the Grey Man's Path." This is a fissure in the rock, across which a huge fragment has fallen, and is supported by the rocks on either side. I should think there must be some legend connected with this name. At all events, it would be no difficult thing to invent one.

I have now briefly enumerated the wonders of this part of the coast,—the Giant's Causeway, and its neighbouring promontories, cliffs, and caverns. I will not affect enthusiasm where I feel none ; and I must candidly acknowledge, that, in the object from which I expected the most, I was the most disappointed. I need scarcely say, that I speak of the Giant's Causeway, and its accompaniments, as visual objects merely, not as addressing the understanding. There is no doubt that, to the scientific observer, there is abundant scope for wonder and admiration ; and the most careless observer even will perceive that Nature has here performed a curious piece of handiwork ; but the formation of a cliff, in tiers of basaltic columns, though in the highest degree curious, does not make

the cliff more sublime; scarcely, I think, is it so much so as when it exhibits a solid front of perpendicular rock: and there is besides, nowhere along the whole coast, sufficient elevation to produce sublimity. Five hundred and fifty feet, is really a very inconsiderable precipice. The traveller then, who visits the Giant's Causeway, expecting to find Nature in her most majestic form, and associating, as I did, with the name, something very sublime, will certainly be disappointed: but if he goes to see something very curious,—something calculated to excite wonder and admiration, he will undoubtedly leave the Causeway fully satisfied.

I returned to Ballycastle in the evening; and before proceeding to Coleraine, I visited some ruined castles which lie at but a short distance from the town. One of these, the ruins of Dunninny Castle, is situated on a crag three hundred feet above the sea, but there is very little of the ruin now standing. Another, the ruins of Kenbane Castle, is situated still more imposingly, on a bolder and more elevated promontory. Of this castle, one tower remains. There are other ruins besides these; but I did not visit them.

In the neighbourhood of Fair-head, collieries are situated, respecting which, some singular facts have been established. In the year 1770, the colliers, on pushing forward an adit, towards the bed of coal in an unexplored part of the cliff, discovered a narrow passage, which, on being examined, was found to be a gallery, pushed forward many hundred yards into the bed of coal,—that it had many branches and chambers; and that these had been formed in a workmanlike manner; and that it was in all respects a regular coal mine: remains of rude tools even, and baskets were found, but they were entirely rotten; and there were no reason to doubt that this colliery had been worked in some very remote era.

Having returned to Coleraine, I now left that town for Antrim and Belfast. But before proceeding on my journey, let me observe, that since I had got into the north of Ireland, travelling had become somewhat more expensive,—not conveyance from place to place; the hire of cars continued the

same ; but the charges at the inns. Breakfasts had risen from 1s. 6d. to 2s. ; dinners, from 2s. to 3s. ; tea, from 1s. to 1s. 6d. ; and servants and car-drivers were not contented with the same remuneration that satisfied them farther south. I should say, that travelling is about one-fourth dearer in the north than in the south of Ireland.

I found another point of difference between the north and the south. Information is not so readily obtained in the north. I do not say it is refused ; but it is not so readily proffered. In the south, it is enough that you are a stranger and a traveller, seeking information. In the north, the why and the wherefore are wanted. I, of course, make an exception of those individuals to whom good letters of introduction are presented : and there are doubtless other exceptions. But that which I have stated is true generally ; and is nothing different from what might be expected, from the different character of the people in the north and in the south of Ireland.

From Coleraine, the first few miles of the road are pretty, lying along the bank of the Bann—which flows through fine cultivated grounds and flourishing plantations ; but the river is soon left to the right, and there is then little to interest or attract. Ballymoney is an indifferently built town, containing about 2000 inhabitants ; but a place of some trade, and with a good linen market. Between Ballymoney and Ballymena, there is little or nothing worthy of notice : part of the way the country is cultivated, but flat and uninteresting ; and part, there is a pretty wide tract of bog-land. Antrim is, for the most part, a flat, cultivated, and not very interesting county, excepting on the coast, and by the side of Belfast loch. It is perhaps the only county in Ireland in which there is anything approaching to a yeomanry ; for here are found a considerable number of large farmers, who hold land in perpetuity, at very low rents ; and these form a respectable and useful class of men, standing in the place of the substantial English farmer, and conferring upon the districts where they live, all the benefits which arise from resident landlords.

Ballymena is reckoned a flourishing town; it has some good streets and respectable-looking houses, and is noted for the extent of its linen-market. The observations which I have already made on the linen trade, when speaking of Coleraine, are applicable to Ballymena, and to the whole of this district. From Ballymena to Antrim, there are two roads; one passing through Randalstown, the other leaving it on the right. The former passes nearer to Shane's Castle and Loch Neagh; but as I purposed remaining a day at Antrim, and visiting Shane's, I took the latter route. I ought not to omit mentioning, that there is a Moravian settlement at a village called Gracehill, near to Ballymena, which I did not visit; but which I understand exhibits a very pleasing picture of prosperity, comfort, and contentedness.

A considerable part of the county of Antrim, on this line of road, is not apparently in quite so prosperous a condition as some other parts of the north. A very comfortable peasantry cannot be expected where the country is unfruitful. There is much bog-land on this line of road: and although I saw nothing like the poverty of the south, I did not recognize so large a share of general comfort amongst the people as I had observed in some other districts.

Antrim is a small town, very pleasantly situated on a bay of Loch Neagh. There is but one street, and nothing in the town worthy of notice; but its environs possess considerable interest. The same evening I reached Antrim, I walked to its round tower, about a mile distant. It is in good preservation, and I believe is considered to be one of the best specimens. Its height is ninety-five feet, and its general construction much the same as that of the other round towers. This round tower is not, like many of its brethren, situated on an elevation; but stands on a perfect flat, and is surrounded by wood, above which it lifts its grey tapering head with fine effect.

The following day I devoted to Shane's Castle, the family seat of the O'Neills, and to the banks of Loch Neagh. I walked to Shane's Castle, through the grounds pertaining to

Massareen Castle, which are themselves worth a visit ; and after an agreeable saunter of a couple of hours, I reached Lord O'Neill's domain. The mansion was consumed by fire in 1816, the only part that escaped the fire being the conservatory of plants. The building is a perfect ruin : some towers are yet standing ; and the very extensive vaults show the immense extent of the building.

But the object of greatest interest, is the magnificent expanse of water which borders this domain. Loch Neagh is twenty miles long, and fifteen broad : its circumference is eighty miles, and it covers an area of 98,000 acres. The counties that form its banks are Antrim, Tyrone, Down, Armagh, and Londonderry ; and it occupies nearly the centre of the province of Ulster. Its level is about thirty feet above that of the sea. The islands of Loch Neagh are neither numerous nor very beautiful, with the exception of Ram's island, which has been tastefully laid out by Earl O'Neill, and upon which stands one of the round towers ; but not one of the most elevated. The banks of Loch Neagh are for the most part flat, never rising to any considerable elevation, and rarely even much departing from a perfect level. There cannot, therefore, be the bold and fine scenery on this lake that distinguishes Killarney, Loch Erne, or Loch Swilly. There are, however, some fine domains on the banks ; with all that kind of beauty which wood, lawn, and cultivation can produce, unassisted by variety of surface.

The depth of Loch Neagh varies considerably at different seasons, but it is not anywhere of great depth. In winter, its greatest depth is about fifty-seven feet ; and in summer, it is about seven feet lower. The rise of the loch causes widespread inundations every winter, covering upwards of 50,000 acres of good land, and an immense tract of bog-land. These inundations are to be expected, owing to the number of large rivers which flow into Loch Neagh, and the comparatively inconsiderable exit which its waters have. Eight considerable rivers flow into Loch Neagh ; and the river Bann is the only outlet of its waters. The best means of

preventing these wasteful inundations would be, to deepen the bed, and improve in consequence the navigation of the Bann.

Fish in great quantities, and of many varieties, abound in Loch Neagh; particularly, the shad, pike, trout, roach, bream, and char; and I must not omit to mention the petrifying qualities of Loch Neagh; in times past, healing qualities were ascribed to it also.

Next to Lake Ladoga, in Russia; Lake Vener, in Sweden; and the lake of Geneva, Loch Neagh is the largest lake in Europe.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Road from Antrim to Belfast—Indications of Prosperity—The People of Belfast, and their Character and Pursuits—Rapid Advance of the town—Details respecting Trade—The Linen Trade of Ulster—Its present Condition and Prospects—Flax Spinning Mills—The Cotton, Muslin, and other Manufactures—Exports and Clearances—Employment of Labour in Belfast, and Enumeration of Sources of Employment—Literature—Political Opinions—Religious Sects—Increase of the Catholic Population—The Belfast Merchant—Traits of Character—Public Institutions—The great Proprietors—The surrounding Country—Carrick-Fergus.

THE road from Antrim to Belfast presents little to interest the traveller. I passed through a country, all under cultivation; very populous; and adorned by handsome country houses, showing by the bleach-fields in their neighbourhood that they were the property of the linen merchants. A few miles before reaching Belfast, a magnificent view is disclosed of Belfast loch, the town, and the surrounding country, from the height over which the road passes; and by a fine road, and a gentle descent, you soon after enter the town.

It needs but a glance at Belfast and the surrounding country, to perceive that this town, and its neighbouring districts, have nothing in common with the rest of Ireland. It is true that Londonderry, Coleraine, and the other northern towns and districts, do not present a contrast to Belfast;—the perfect contrasts must be looked for in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught; but the visual evidences of prosperity are so

much more abundant and so much more striking in Belfast, than even in the other most flourishing towns of Ulster, that I am justified in saying, that Belfast has little or nothing in common with the rest of Ireland. Within the town, and without the town, the proofs of prosperity are equally striking. Walk towards the outskirts, and fine broad streets, and handsome rows and squares—evidently but of yesterday, and as evidently the residences of wealthy persons—are seen stretching in all directions, from the central parts of the town :—return into the commercial part of the town, and nothing will be seen that might not justify a comparison with the most flourishing among the manufacturing and commercial cities of the empire. Walk into the neighbouring country, and the evidences of enterprise and capital are still more abundant. On all sides are seen, near and far, manufactories, or mills, as they are called, of immense extent, evidently newly erected, and vying,—nay, I think, surpassing,—in size, and in all other respects, the mills and factories of our great manufacturing towns; others are seen in course of erection; and, round and round, scores of tall chimneys, and their clouds of utilitarian smoke, remind one of Manchester, Glasgow, and Leeds. No mud cabins,—these I had left behind me long ago,—no poor cottages form a suburb, or disfigure it; and neither in the streets, nor in the suburbs, is the eye arrested by objects of compassion. There is, in fact, no trace of an Irish population among any class: the lower orders are not ragged and starving; and idle,—because unemployed; the middle and upper classes are not loungers and men of pleasure. Pleasure, in Belfast, is a very secondary consideration. No town, perhaps, of the United Kingdom contains so few who live upon a fixed income derived from capital or property. Every one has something to do; and every one appears to find pleasure in doing something. Tradesmen do not here shut up shop, and set up for fine gentlemen, on the strength of a few thousand pounds. Merchants do not ingeniously mingle the *utile* and the *dulce*. Business is life here—and life is business: and the merchant, worth 50,000*l.*,

looks upon it as a sufficient relaxation from the toils of the Linen-hall, that he spends the evening at his country-house and regales his eye with a view of his well-filled bleach-field. It is impossible that Cork, Limerick, or Waterford, should ever become altogether like Belfast; because the character of the Scotch and the Irish is essentially different: but of this difference, and of the cause of the superior condition of the north, I have already spoken at sufficient length.

The present town of Belfast is but of twenty-five years standing: at least one-third of the town has been built within the last fifteen years; and no town of the United Kingdom has had so rapid an increase in population. Seventy years ago, Belfast contained but 8,000 inhabitants. Its present population is 65,000. It has therefore doubled itself three times in seventy years; and, in all respects, its improvement and prosperity have been commensurate with the increase of population, and, indeed, have necessarily gone hand in hand with it. It is greatly to be regretted, that in the improvements and extension of Belfast, architectural beauty has been so little consulted. Regularity appears to be all that is aimed at: every house is brother to its neighbour; and streets and rows present unbroken lines of buildings, uniform in height, and unrelieved by the least architectural ornament. A chaste architectural design is not at all inconsistent with moderate expense; but anything is better than the *lily hungry* look of the modern streets of Belfast. If a beautiful architectural design be too high a flight for the architect, let him, at least, take refuge in the picturesque.

Let me now speak shortly of the present condition of the trade and manufactures of this emporium of the north of Ireland;—and first of the linen trade, in which important changes have been effected of late.

I have already, when speaking of Coleraine, slightly alluded to the effect of the American tariff: to this I must again advert. When this tariff was published; or rather, when it was even known to be in contemplation, a great increase immediately took place in the demand for linen cloth: this

demand was of course met by increased production; and hence, mills for spinning yarn began to spring up. This was the beginning of a great and important change. The operation of spinning used previously to be performed altogether by the hand labour of the women, throughout the country districts; while the weaving was, in like manner, performed by the men. The event, however, to which I have alluded, was the commencement of a change, which, although far from being as yet generally effected, is rapidly proceeding. The erection of spinning mills quickly succeeded each other; and when the American market opened, the quantity spun and bought was found to be somewhat beyond the demand; there is little doubt, however, that the trade would immediately have recovered itself, had it not been for the money project of General Jackson, which unsettled the market, and threw back the trade,—leaving a large stock at home and abroad, in the hands of both spinner and merchant. I found, however, a general impression amongst those best qualified to judge, that although the trade had been a little overdone, yet, that when the American money market should be settled, and if the French commercial system should continue on its present footing, the linen trade would again recover from its present temporary depression, and become, if not a highly flourishing trade, at least a healthy and remunerating one. A very large capital has been recently invested in the erection of spinning mills; and there is, perhaps, reason to think, that this investment has been carried sufficiently far: eight or ten of these extensive buildings have been newly erected, or are now in course of erection. Their whole arrangements and machinery are faultless; and I would recommend the traveller to visit the magnificent establishment of Messrs. Mulholland, from which some idea may be formed of the enterprise of Belfast merchants, and of the capital at their disposal.

In several of the new spinning mills of Belfast, we see, not the investment of new capital, but the transfer of capital from the cotton trade, for which flax spinning has been substituted.

The cotton trade is exposed to greater risks. Manchester possesses advantages, against which no other place can successfully compete. The vicinity of the great cotton market to Manchester, gives to it a decided advantage; and the cotton trade is there carried on, on so extensive a scale, that it must always command the preference of American and other foreign purchasers. Labour is, no doubt, lower in Ireland; and in the production of some particular fabrics, this, with advantages of situation and of water power, may counterbalance the other superior advantages of Manchester; but the difference in the price of labour between Ulster and Lancashire is not found to be an equivalent for the advantages I have named; and for the power of supplying, without delay, orders to any extent. The change from the cotton to the linen trade, appears to be a very natural transfer of capital; it is a change to a trade, the raw material of which is produced at home; a trade in which there is greatly less competition; and in which, Ireland has already a reputation made. I cannot help thinking, that the spinning of worsted yarn would be a profitable investment of capital in Ireland. It is certain that much of the raw material,—a bulky article—is exported from Ireland. In this manufacture, the raw material would be found at home; and, what is of still more importance, there would be a home market for the manufactured article.

Capital, throughout Ireland, is evidently flowing into the linen trade, which is indeed the natural manufacture of the country. Weaving is not now, as it was formerly, performed exclusively by the countryman on his own account. The manufacturer purchases the yarn of the spinners, either of Belfast or of England; and gives it out to the country people to be wove. Some attempts at power weaving have been made; but hitherto without much success: the attempt, however, is not relinquished; and should it ever perfectly succeed, there would be a fearful, though no doubt a temporary, change for the worse in the condition of the population of these districts. This, indeed, may be partly looked for,

from the spread of spinning mills. Throughout the greater part of Ulster, land is held in very small portions: and the superior comforts of the country people have been, in some considerable degree, owing to the domestic linen manufacture. The transference of spinning from hand labour to power, will be most sensibly felt; and if power should also be employed in weaving, it will perhaps be seen how much of the superior character, conduct, and condition of the labouring classes of the north, has been the result of employment and its rewards.

The establishments of the merchants in the Linen-hall, are well worth a visit; the linen made up for the market is really a pretty sight to one who never saw it before, bound round with its embossed gilt paper and gaudy ribbons. The expense of ornamenting the linen increases the price to the purchaser from a penny to a penny halfpenny a yard; but in the American market, they would not look at the linen unless it were so ornamented. One would not expect this of sturdy republicans. The bleaching fields are also worth a visit. The principal of these lie a mile or two out of town; and it is the general practice of the merchant to live near to his bleach-field.

The wages of all the persons employed in a bleaching-house average from 6*s.* to 9*s.* per week; but the labour averages more than twelve hours per day: the wages of boys employed in the bleach-works, are from 3*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* In the flax-spinning mills, girls earn from 2*s.* to 4*s.* per week: and the average wages of weavers may be stated at about 8*s.* These are undoubtedly low wages; but the linen trade is of that peculiar character, that the labour of young and old, boys and girls, is required: and although the weaver earns but 8*s.* per week, he has perhaps two girls who earn 6*s.* between them on the spinning wheel; and a boy or two, who earn 3*s.* or 4*s.* a-piece in the bleach-field.

Next in importance to the linen trade of Belfast stands the calico trade. I have mentioned, that there is a disposition to transfer capital from this trade to the spinning of flax; but the latter trade is, notwithstanding, not a declining trade:

it is not carried on to the same extent as heretofore, but it is said to be still a wholesome trade. I cannot, however, consider a trade to be wholesome, which does not provide a decent sustenance to those who labour in it. The manufacture of calico is carried on both by power and by hand loom ; but wages are very low, not averaging more than 4s. per week. Calico weaving is paid by the piece, and is performed in the country ; there is no calico weaving in the town of Belfast. The cotton printing business is at present almost extinct ; but it is a common opinion, that it will revive, though not with Irish capital, but by the agency of Manchester houses, who would find their advantage in employing Irish print-works, by the greater facility which they would have, of concealing patterns.

Next to the cotton trade, the muslin trade is the most important. This may be said to be at present a thriving trade ; wages are higher than formerly, and labour indeed somewhat scarce ; but this is perhaps partly owing to the strike of the muslin weavers of Glasgow, and consequent temporary employment of Irish labour. This trade may be said, however, to be upon the whole moderately prosperous. The wages of labour in it average about 8s. per week.

Besides these larger manufactures of Belfast, there are other lesser channels of employment. There is a considerable quantity of labour employed, and fairly remunerated, in the manufacture of weavers' looms and shuttles, &c.—a branch of trade which will also become extinct by the adoption of power ; and female labour is pretty extensively employed in the embroidering and working of muslins for the English market. Belfast has also some distilleries and breweries, and glass-works, and many tan-yards, and vinegar works, and soap-boiling houses. All of these manufacture for the home market. In Belfast, as in the other sea-ports, the general import trade has gone out of the hands of the general merchant ; but has been only more widely diffused among the smaller dealers, who are now almost all importers.

The export trade of Belfast is large, and increasing in every branch—in grain, in provisions, in butter. In linen, I have already said that Belfast is the point of export for the whole linen districts; it is also the point of export for a large grain district.

The gross custom-house receipts for the year ending 5th January, 1832, were 200,570*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.*

The gross receipts for 1833, were 216,280*l.* 10*s.* 5*d.*; and for the year ending 5th January, 1834, the amount was 228,945*l.* 6*s.* 10*d.*

In the year ending 5th January, 1832, 2764 vessels, measuring 226,174 tons, cleared inwards coastwise. In the year ending 5th January, 1833, the number of vessels was 2787, and the tonnage 230,400. In the last year, the number of vessels inwards had increased to 3078, and the tonnage to 262,508.

Outwards, coastwise, there has also been an increase. In 1831, the tonnage was 155,416; in 1832, 167,857; and in 1833, 174,694.

In foreign trade, the increase has been no less remarkable. In 1831, 27,944 tons cleared inwards; in 1832, the amount was 29,559; and in 1833, 33,128. Outwards, the foreign trade tonnage in 1831, was 35,335; in 1832, it amounted to 32,117; and in 1833, it was 31,665.

I do not think any apology necessary for this somewhat lengthened notice of the manufactures and trade of Belfast. To many it will be uninteresting, and by them it may be passed over: but Belfast and its neighbourhood, being the great centre of the linen trade of Ulster, the prosperity of which so much depends upon the condition and prospects of that trade; and great and important changes being at present rapidly accomplishing in the linen trade of Ulster, I thought it necessary to be explicit; more especially as the changes to which I have adverted must materially affect the condition of the labouring classes of the north of Ireland.

From the details which I have given, it may be gathered

that there is little complaint of want of employment in Belfast and its neighbourhood. The sources of employment are many. The export trade, and the extensive bacon and provision yards connected with it, are one important source of employment. The shipping and ship-building, also connected with it, employ many. Of the linen trade, as the most fertile of all sources of employment, I have already spoken at sufficient length. To this must be added, as other sources of employment, the calico and muslin trade. I have also mentioned the domestic manufacture of tools and utensils employed in these manufactures: to all these sources of employment must be added, the demand for mason and carpenter work, and common labour, in so improving a town: together with the portage and other labour required in a town to and from which between sixty and eighty public conveyances run daily. Altogether, there is nearly full and constant employment for labour in Belfast. I visited many of the houses of the lower class, in the suburbs and lanes of the town, and found no complaint of want of work: and I am inclined to think that all the healthy and industrious labourers can afford to live in tolerable comfort. I know that labourers could with difficulty be found when I was at Belfast; and the ordinary rate of wages was then 1s. 3d. per day. The number of infirm and diseased poor in Belfast bears no comparison with the infirm pauper population of Limerick. In a city where there is no employment for the people, there must be a constant increase in the number of diseased and infirm; since a few weeks of privation, and imperfect and unwholesome nourishment, or even a day or two of abstinence, will reduce the strongest able-bodied labourer to the condition of an infirm pauper, and lay him on a sick bed. And besides, no large quarter of Belfast is the property of a Lord Limerick.

The middle classes of Belfast are not only a thinking but an educated and a reading people. There are no fewer than fourteen booksellers in Belfast; and all of them enjoy a fair share of business. Nor are libraries wanting. The

Linen-hall library contains about 9000 volumes: the town contains four circulating libraries, and more than one private book society; and several others are established in the neighbouring villages. Reading clubs are indeed numerous among the country people of Down, Antrim, and Armagh,—I mean among the lower classes; and are well and liberally conducted. I ascertained that the number of Tory periodicals sold in Belfast does not amount to half the number sold of a Liberal character. Of the monthly periodicals, *Tait's Magazine* enjoys the largest circulation; and next to it comes the *Dublin University Magazine*.

As for the political opinions of Belfast, the people here are not, as they are in some parts of the north, bound neck and heel to ultra-Toryism, and high church abuses. I found in Belfast a large though not a concentrated moderate party,—liberals, and supporters of the present administration. The members of the church of England, of the upper classes, are almost all Conservatives; while the lower classes of all descriptions of Protestants,—Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists, are Orangemen. But the respectable middle classes of the Presbyterians, and their dissenters (who together form the chief body of the population), and many also of the Methodists, are liberal, and moderate in their opinions. This classification applies not to Belfast only, but to the greater part of the province of Ulster, especially its towns. And I will take this opportunity of observing, that the assertion so frequently and confidently made, that the present government has no supporters in Ireland, is untrue. I feel myself entitled to assert, that a moderate party is steadily growing in Ireland: and although the greater numbers, as well as greater vehemence, of the two great parties,—the Tory and the Catholic party,—throw the third into shade; and although it may not be at present so concentrated as to entitle it to take the name of a distinct party: yet, among the intelligence of Ireland, thousands are scattered, who hold moderate views, and who are ready to adhere to any govern-

ment that will uncompromisingly hold a middle course,—despising alike the ravings of Orangemen, and the insidious friendship of mock patriots; listening only to the voice of compassion and the calls of justice.

The population of Belfast is divided into many religious sects. The most numerous sect is the Presbyterian and its dissenters; the Catholics come next; then the Church; and then the Methodists. Besides these, there are of course smaller sects, such as Baptists, Unitarians, &c. The increase in the Catholic population of Belfast has been great of late years. Sixty years ago, the number of Catholics did not reach sixty families; twenty years ago, their numbers amounted to about 4000; and at present the Catholic population reaches 15,000. This is no real increase of Popery. The whole population, twenty years ago, was about half what it is at present; and although the Catholic population has trebled itself since that time, this is only a result of the rapid increase of the town in prosperity, by which labour has been attracted from the country.

I have already spoken at some length of the distinctive character of the people of the north. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than in Belfast. Even among the richest merchants and manufacturers, many of whom are worth 50,000*l.*, and some perhaps double that sum, no display is seen; no pomp or ostentation. Things are plain, but comfortable; and although there is no want of courtesy and attention to strangers who are well recommended, the hospitalities of Belfast are not offered with that *empressement* which distinguishes the south and west. The people of Belfast count the cost of everything; and to this disposition the Belfast merchant owes, in a great measure, the possession of those means of enterprise and liberality which are shown in his own private speculations, as well as in the public benefits for which the town is indebted to him. The merchants of Belfast are too busy and too much occupied in money-getting, to have time for much company keeping; and Sunday, which

in the south and west is a day of pleasure, is here passed at church and meeting-houses.

I must not, in this notice of Belfast, omit all mention of its public buildings and institutions. These are numerous, and well regulated. Among the many churches and chapels, only two or three are distinguished by their architecture. Much ornament is not to be looked for in the religious edifices which are chiefly devoted to Presbyterianism and its sects.

The most important public institution, is called "the Academical Institution." The exterior of the building is no way remarkable; but I believe it is considered fully to answer the purposes for which it was instituted. The institution comprehends a school, and a collegiate department; both of them providing a comprehensive system of education. The Presbyterian bodies of Ireland accept the certificates of this institution, as equivalent to a degree of M.A. from the Scotch universities: and almost all of the candidates for the Presbyterian ministry in Ireland are now educated at Belfast. Attached to the institution there is a library of about 2000 volumes; and the foundation of a museum has been laid.

Belfast has many societies intended for intellectual improvement; among which I would name, a Literary Society; an Historic Society; a Natural History Society, to which a museum is attached; a Mechanics' Institute; and a Botanic Garden. Nor is there any want of institutions for the alleviation of man's bodily wants and sufferings. Among the buildings dedicated to trade, the most important are, the Commercial Buildings, and the White Linen Hall; the former of which is a handsome structure; and the latter—the great receptacle of the wealth of Belfast—is well worthy of the attention of the traveller. It would be easy to enlarge upon the public institutions, &c. of Belfast; but longer details of this nature would be inconsistent with my plan.

The great proprietors in and about Belfast are, the Marquis of Donegal; the Marquis of Hertford; and Colonel Pakenham.

The first of these has no power over his property; both in and out of the town, it is all let on lease in perpetuity, on payment of fines. There is a large class, however, of respectable middle-men; and land in the neighbourhood, I consider moderately let. Neither is the Marquis of Hertford's land exorbitantly high let; though it is somewhat higher than it ought to be. Colonel Pakenham has the reputation of being a good landlord; and his land is the lowest let of any in the neighbourhood.

The country around Belfast is extremely beautiful. The loch stretches on one side: and the fine and tolerably elevated range of hills which bound it, and partly encircle the town, presents much beauty and variety: they are cultivated nearly to the summit; and their slopes are thickly studded with the country houses of the merchants. But the environs of Belfast are seen to most advantage in an excursion to Carrick-Fergus, where I spent a day before leaving this part of the country. Choose the time of full tide to leave Belfast for Carrick-Fergus, and no one can be otherwise than delighted. The scenery on Belfast loch is not bold; it is soft and pleasing. The breadth of the loch averages about five miles; and both the Down and the Antrim banks are finely diversified by cultivation, and by numerous seats and villages. As we approach Carrick-Fergus, the town, and especially the castle, become prominent and striking objects; and indeed it is the situation more than anything within the town, that renders this place interesting. The parish church is a venerable edifice, and contains some monuments worthy of notice: but the castle is the object of the greatest interest. It stands upon a rock, which is peninsular: and with its grey, time-worn, and massive walls, and lofty circular towers, arrest in no ordinary degree the attention of the traveller. The commercial importance which once attached to Carrick-Fergus, has long since been transferred to Belfast; but this place, and not Belfast, being the county town, the assizes are held here, and a certain degree of importance—more nominal than real—

still belongs to it. I did not remain long enough in Carrick-Fergus to make my accustomed inquiries; but returned to Belfast the same evening, with pleasant and vivid recollections of the beautiful country I had passed through, and of the ancient city of Carrick-Fergus.

CHAPTER XXX.

Belfast to Armagh—The City of Armagh—The Archbishop—His Grounds and Mansion—The Cathedral—Political and Religious opinions—Chief Landowners—Lords Charlemont, Gosford, and Caledon—New System pursued on Lord Gosford's Estate—Armagh to Newry—Newry; its People and Trade—Landowners—Marquis of Downshire, Earl Roden, and Earl Kilmorey—Rostrevor, Warren's Point, and Carlingford Bay.

I now left Belfast for the archiepiscopal city of Armagh. I travelled by the old road to Lisburn, and passed through a rich, populous, and highly cultivated country;—the range of Antrim hills rising to the right; with numerous country houses, generally surrounded or flanked by bleach-fields, scattered over their nearest slopes. Lisburn is a clean, neat, and lively town, enjoying a good trade; and, of the inhabitants, I may merely say, that the observations I have already made upon the condition of the people of Ulster, apply to Lisburn, and to all places where the linen trade has established itself. Beyond Lisburn the country is neither so beautiful, nor so naturally fertile, as between Belfast and Lisburn; but it is all under cultivation; and industry exacts the most from it. No object of great interest presents itself between Lisburn and Armagh, which I reached too late in the evening to permit me to do more than distribute my letters of introduction.

Armagh is a thriving, respectable, and agreeably situated

town, containing about 10,000 inhabitants. The country round the city is wavy, well diversified with wood, highly cultivated, and very populous. The city itself exhibits unerring signs of improvement. New and handsome rows of houses are seen in several directions; and in the appearance of the private houses, and of the shops, there are evidences not merely of wealth, but of what some would call gentility,—for want of a better word. Here, as in every other part of the province of Ulster that I had yet visited, I found the linen trade advancing; and I ascertained that during at least a year previous to my visiting Armagh, want of employment had been unknown; and, indeed, at the time of which I speak, the supply of labour was not equal to the demand.

I had not been long in Armagh, before I paid a visit to the domain of the Lord Primate. The grounds of his Grace are kept in excellent order, and are laid out with much taste. Near to the gate, but within the park, there is a holy well, where it is said St. Patrick, being in want of water to baptize, miraculously obtained it by striking the rock. The Protestant archbishop's park is an awkward locality for a holy well: and since it has been comprehended within his Grace's domain, a rival holy well has been set up in a more convenient place. Within the archbishop's grounds there is also an obelisk of marble, a hundred and fifty-seven feet high, and of chaste proportions and decorations. It was erected by Archbishop Robinson, as a means of employing labourers in a time of need; and this excellent man has, therefore, in the erection of this obelisk, unconsciously raised a monument to his own worth. The same individual erected, at his own expense, the archiepiscopal palace,—a building simple and chaste in its design, but no way remarkable for architectural beauty. A pretty private chapel, on a classical design, stands near to the palace.

The cathedral is an object of more interest; it is the oldest cathedral church in Ireland; and had so given way in many places, that being no longer a safe temple of devotion, it was resolved that it should be rebuilt. This plan, however, was altered; and the architect having commenced operations,

many beautiful arches and windows were discovered to have been built up, in carrying into effect alterations which at former periods had been rendered necessary by the ravages of time. These beauties have now been laid open ; but in the course of the present operations, other frailties in the building were discovered, which required the utmost skill and decision on the part of the architect. The pillars which supported the whole structure were discovered to be bent from the perpendicular : and the perpendicularity of these pillars the architect has already partly restored, and will no doubt restore effectually, by the contracting and expanding powers of heat and cold, applied to iron rods, which are passed from one pillar to the other,—the pillars being braced round with iron. Part of this venerable edifice is as old as Henry III., and the more modern part is of the reign of Edward III. Attached to the cathedral, there is a valuable library, containing about 26,000 volumes. I never knew a public library conducted upon principles so liberal as those which regulate the library of Armagh. Every one resident within thirty miles of Armagh is entitled to its benefits ; and may carry away any book by depositing double its value.

The primate is, for the most part, resident in Armagh ; and this high dignitary bears a good name in his city. He is liberal in his doings ; and has an eye upon those who are less fortunately circumstanced than himself. He built, and he supports, a fever hospital, at his own expense : he encourages improvement ; is generous in his dealings with the people about him ; and spends his income in Armagh. Towards the restoration of the cathedral also, he has subscribed 8000*l.* ; and it is understood, that he will give whatever farther sums may be necessary.

Armagh is much divided in its political and religious opinions. There is supposed to be a pretty equal division of Catholics and Protestants ; of Conservatives and Liberals. I speak at present of the county of Armagh. The great land-owners are for the most part liberal. The middle ranks and shopkeepers of the town are divided ; but the majority,

being Presbyterians, are liberals. The farmers are generally Orangemen; and the lowest orders, who are mostly Catholics, are repealers. Armagh is not certainly so conservative as might be expected in a place where the primate resides; especially when, to the influence of wealth and rank, is added that which character commands.

Taking a circuit of ten miles round Armagh, the chief proprietors are Lords Charlemont, Gosford, and Caledon, and the Brownlow family. None of these are bad landlords; and Lord Caledon is all that could be desired—a really good resident country gentleman. I spent some hours in the neighbourhood of Caledon; and was greatly pleased with the aspect of everything. Every improvement, and every improving man upon his lordship's estate, is encouraged, and is permitted to reap the fruits of his industry. Lord Caledon is a miller and a flour merchant. He has erected two large mills for flour and oats, at a cost of nearly 20,000*l.*; and he purchases from his tenants whatever grain is brought to market, at the Armagh market price; supplying therefore to the farmers a near and ready market. The rents on Lord Caledon's estate have been reduced at least 25 per cent. within the last seven years.

Lord Gosford's estate is entirely in the management of his lordship's agent, who has been adopting—and upon the whole, successfully—a new system in the management of the property. The holdings upon the estate are very small, and the tenants were mostly in arrears; and the choice was given them, either of being ejected, or of adopting a certain improved state of husbandry prescribed to them. This consisted chiefly in the stall-feeding of cows, in preserving the manure, and in a more judicious rotation, in which green crops should receive the attention they deserve. The system has, upon the whole, answered; though, at first, all the obstacles which arise from ignorance and old usage were encountered. Gradually, however, example, and the good results of the system, had their influence; and the arrears are now greatly diminished. Other landlords too, particularly Colonel Close, have followed

the example set : and although the complaint of high rents in Ireland be general and just, it will be admitted, that where the alternative is possible, it is better to bring up husbandry to the rent, than to bring down rent to the husbandry ; for this more effectually raises the condition of the people, and opens new sources of employment.

The estate of Lord Charlemont is divided into too small holdings ; but the land is not high let, comparatively with other parts of Ireland. Everywhere throughout Ulster, there is more employment for the people, and less competition for land ; and consequently, lower rents than in the other provinces.

I must not quit Armagh, without mentioning the Observatory. This institution was founded and endowed by the late Archbishop Robinson : and the professorship is at present ably filled by Doctor Robinson, whose name stands deservedly high among the astronomers of the present day.

Between Armagh and Newry, I passed through an undulating, populous, and fully cultivated country ; and from some of the heights enjoyed an extensive prospect over a richly diversified landscape ; and after a few hours agreeable drive, I reached Newry, and alighted at Davis' Hotel.

Newry is a respectable-looking town : the lower and newest part of the town is well built, and contains many excellent houses and shops, and more than one handsome public building ; and although the older town, built on the side of a steep ridge, possesses little attraction, yet, to one well acquainted with the Irish towns, even the worst part of Newry will appear respectable : and it enjoys the rare distinction of having no wretched suburbs dragging their miserable length from every outlet. The Protestant church, and the Catholic chapel, both situated in the same street, and both newly erected, are worthy rivals to each other. They are remarkably handsome buildings ; and what the Catholic chapel wants in height, it makes up for in capacity. About two-thirds of the population of Newry are Catholics ; and the remaining third is nearly equally divided between Episco-

pallians and the other Protestant sects, of which Presbyterians form by far the greatest proportion. Religious and political opinions run high in Newry.

Newry is a town of considerable trade and of increasing consequence : its situation is well adapted for commerce ; from Loch Carlingford, a canal communicates with the town ; and from the town, is carried up to Loch Neagh. Newry, therefore, possesses immense advantages as a point of export ; the water communication to Loch Neagh throwing open the extensive corn districts which lie to the north and west. But the canal from Loch Carlingford to the town, is not thought sufficient for the trade ; and it is intended to deepen the river navigation below Newry, so that vessels of three or four hundred tons' burden may come up to the town ; and this work is now proceeding.

The export trade of Newry is, next to Belfast, the largest in the north of Ireland. The tonnage inwards, during the last three years, averaged 600,000 : outwards, about 45,000. The annual Custom-house revenue is about £130,000. In all its exports, the town is increasing : in the article of butter alone, 80,000 casks are exported yearly ; and among the chief articles of import trade, I may name flax-seed, of which not less than 10,000 tons will have been this year received at the port of Newry.

The chief proprietors of the district round Newry, are the Marquis of Downshire, Earl Roden, and the Earl of Kilmorey. The last owns the land which lies nearest to the town ; and his lands are let enormously high : neither the value of the land, nor the real interest of the landlord, determines the rent ; competition alone regulates it. I saw rocky hill land, lying several miles from the town, and certainly not worth 10s. an acre, which had lately been let to the highest bidder, at 30s.

The Marquis of Downshire holds a deservedly high character as a landlord. Rack-rents are not to be found on his lordship's property ; and his tenants are comfortable, and even prosperous. His lordship is also a zealous encourager of farming societies, which have been established under his

auspices in many districts and parishes, and are found to be most useful,—not merely in their beneficial effects on husbandry, but also in promoting good feeling among persons of different ranks and of different opinions. Earl Roden also bears a high character among men of all parties,—a character which must certainly be merited, since no man has pursued a course so little conciliatory as his lordship. The Conservative agitation of this part of Ireland is not popular with the majority of the educated Conservative population. The Orange lodges are chiefly composed of the farmers,—a highly respectable class, certainly; but very far inferior in intelligence and information to the shopkeepers and tradesmen of the towns,—among whom very few Orangemen are to be found.

I had heard much of the beauty of Rostrevor; and before leaving Newry, I devoted a day to it; and now that I have seen Rostrevor, I pronounce it to be one of the most beautiful spots in Ireland.

The road from Newry to Rostrevor skirts the river all the way, till it widens into Carlingford bay; and it is not often that one passes through a finer valley than that which extends between Newry and the sea: the boundaries of the valley can scarcely be finer than they are: and it possesses this rare distinction, that the mountains, in place of gradually softening down into tameness, as the valley approaches the sea, rise into greater elevation; and the mountain boundaries of the lower part of Carlingford bay rival, in height and boldness, the wilds of Kerry and Galway. But there is here a beautiful intermixture of the soft and smiling, with the abrupt and sterile. Cultivated slopes, and wooded heights, form the immediate banks of the river and the lake; and mansions, villas, and cottages, are every where thickly strewn; and the bay is so completely land-locked, that the calmness of its waters is generally in perfect union with the gentle beauty of the scenery.

A few miles below Newry, and about a mile before the river is merged into Carlingford bay, stands Narrow-water castle. The river which, above and below, is several hundred yards

wide, is here contracted by a huge protruding rock, from which rise the massive walls and tower of this ancient military defence. Then, a little farther, we come to Warren's Point, the bathing-place of Newry, and the great resort of the citizens on Sundays. But, for summer quarters, commend me to the beautiful seclusion of Rostrevor. This famed village is situated on a gentle acclivity, rising from a little cove of Carlingford bay. Behind the village, picturesque and broken hills screen it from the east and north; and fine oak woods fill their ravines, and climb almost to their summits: the little cove is in front of the village, opening out into the wide circular bay, with its elevated, dark, and abrupt mountain boundaries; while on either side, the village is flanked by the happiest combination of wood and lawn, copse and garden, villa and cottage. Nature has certainly done much for Rostrevor; and art, enough.

Here, at Newry, I considered my journey throughout Ireland to be nearly accomplished. I had intended, indeed, to have travelled to Dublin by way of Navan, and the banks of the Boyne; but severe indisposition forced me to change this intention; and to proceed to the capital without deviation, and with more speed also, than had been my usual custom. Here, however, I shall pause, to introduce in this place a chapter, which the mere tourist reader may pass over; but which I recommend to the particular attention of all who are interested in the welfare of the Irish nation. I reserve for a short concluding chapter a brief notice of my progress from Newry to Dublin, and a few sketches of the capital and its neighbourhood, which I have omitted.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANSWERS

To the Queries issued by Government, for the assistance of the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the state of the Poor of Ireland, and

REPORT THEREUPON.

THE reader will probably recollect, that, in a former chapter, I stated, that before leaving England I had been furnished, by the kindness of my friends, with copies of all the papers issued for the assistance and direction of the commissioners appointed by government to inquire into the condition of the Irish poor. The commissioners have been pursuing their inquiries during the present year; and I believe it will be yet some months before their Report be delivered. Meanwhile, and as a sort of preparation for the reception of that report, which will doubtless contain a mass of important information, I venture to present my own report,—and in my own way. I trust that I shall not be accused of disrespect towards the commissioners, in thus anticipating them, and in first catching the public ear. I have my reasons for this.

It may appear extraordinary presumption in me to assert, that the statements of an humble individual like myself are more entitled to carry weight with them than the report of the government commissioners. But such is my belief; and I will candidly state the grounds of such a belief.

I do not hesitate to say, that I, a single individual, an unpretending traveller, have possessed advantages, and means of eliciting truth, which no posse of persons, travelling as commissioners, and backed by authority of government, could ever command. If this be the fact, it follows that the belief I have mentioned above must be justly founded.

No one, I believe, who has any acquaintance with Ireland will hesitate to say, that an official character is that which is the least likely to inspire confidence. The mayors, magistrates, and merchants, whom the commissioners may officially call before them, will no doubt answer the particular queries which may be addressed to them: but this is only second-hand information; for the most important of these queries relate to that class of society of which these individuals can speak but imperfectly from their own knowledge. A few hours spent on a mountain side, in confidential and free talk, in the cabins, or in the fields, with a dozen farmers and labourers, are worth days of official interrogation: and I assert it to be a fact, that even supposing the commissioners to carry their inquiries into the minutæ of personal observation of the mountain and the valley, as in some instances they did;—yet, accompanied, as I know them to have been, by individuals known in the country, and frequently (as I have also access to know) these individuals not concealing the official character of the visitors, *the truth was not to be arrived at*. There is one sad omission in the instructions delivered to the commissioners.—There ought to have been printed in front, and in large characters, these words: “Upon no account, let your official character be known among the country people, from whom you wish to receive true information.”

On this head, my advantage over the commissioners is

self-evident. There is something in the pride of office, that clings to poor human nature. It is difficult for his majesty's commissioner altogether to divest himself of his importance; nay, it is scarcely seemly that he should. But a traveller like myself has no drawbacks of this kind. I had not to cloak my dignities, and achieve a triumph over my own importance, before I could make myself useful. I could freely take a glass of illicit whiskey with the farmer, and a potato with the labourer; and take a turn with him in digging his turf: I could sit down in the hedge whiskey-house; and jest with the landlady, and dance a jig with the daughter;—all which would be very unseemly in a government commissioner. In order to win the confidence of an Irish peasant, the free and easy is absolutely essential.

But I possessed another and still greater advantage over the commissioners. In most of my voyages of discovery, among the mountains and valleys, as well as in the suburbs of the towns, I was accompanied by my wife. Some may smile at this acknowledgment; but all who know any thing of the Irish peasantry will at once perceive the importance of this advantage. In so miserable a condition are the peasantry of Ireland, and so little good understanding is there between the upper and the lower ranks, that the sight of a well-dressed person approaching the cabin door, or the farm inclosure, instantly begets suspicion. The appearance of a female as quickly disarms it. Drivers, and agents, and tithe-proctors, and excise officers, are not accompanied in their visits by ladies; nor indeed *any* official person. So small too is the intercourse between the aristocracy of Ireland and the lower orders, that the visit of a lady to a cabin is regarded as a peculiar condescension, and is met by a proportional confidence; and, moreover, does not everybody know, how amity and confidence are won by little kindnesses shown to the children of an Irish mother; and that a halfpenny to one, and a penny to another, and kind inquiries, beget a world of good will. I repeat, that the smiling face of a lady, and the "God save all here!" from a stranger and a traveller,

are better means of winning the confidence of the Irish peasant, than all the powers with which government commissioners were ever invested.

I will name another advantage, which I believe myself to possess. The inquiries of the commissioners were intrusted to different individuals, whose duties were confined to different districts, in different counties; and from the information furnished by these individuals, the general report will of course be framed. Now, the disadvantage of this is obvious. The commissioner whose duties extend over districts of Derry, Down, or Antrim, knows nothing of the west and south: and the condition which appears to him to be, and which he reports to be, very miserable, would have appeared very different, if he had seen the poor of Leinster and Munster. He is not in a condition to speak comparatively of the condition of the poor; and the true causes of the differences which exist are left untouched. Again, the commissioners are not, of course, all equally well qualified for their task: and the general report, therefore, must be framed from materials unequal in their value, and from statements necessarily differing, even in authenticity. These defects do not attach to the report of one who has travelled over every part of a country, and who is thus enabled to compare one part with another.

I have reserved to the last the mention of one other advantage. I cannot help thinking, that the practice and experience in inquiring into the condition of the people, which many years' travelling have brought me, must have given to me an advantage over individuals—appointed as no doubt they all were, by reason of superior endowments,—but still, not practised in the inquiries committed to them: and perhaps I may be permitted to add, that the public may, for this reason, be inclined to put more faith in the report of an individual, to whose similar statements respecting other countries they are already accustomed. I will now proceed with my task, which I shall accomplish with as much brevity as possible.

I have before me two sets of queries,—“Queries for the rural districts,” and “Queries for parishes in large towns;”—besides a thick *brochure*, entitled, “Instructions given by the Commissioners appointed to inquire into the State of the Poor of Ireland, to the Assistant Commissioners.” I shall first take up the “queries for the rural districts,” as being, in my opinion, the most important document. The queries contained in it have reference to particular districts. My replies to these queries refer to the whole of Ireland, and are, in truth, a repetition, in a concentrated form, of the facts which are scattered throughout this volume.

The first three queries refer to the size of the parishes, or barony, respecting which information is wanted; and to the relative proportions of wood, arable, pasture, waste, and bog.

I do not very well see how any one but a surveyor could answer these queries. As my answers refer to the whole country, I pass them over.

The fourth query is an important one. It is, “What is the average rent of arable land, and of pasture land, in your parish?”

It is impossible to state what is the rent of arable land, distinct from pasture land; because in almost every farm there is both; and the rent is, of course, so much per acre, taking both together. The rent also depends upon the vicinity of the land to a town: besides, to tell the average rent of land, is to give no real information; because, without precise information as to the quality of land, of which no description can convey a just notion, no idea could be formed of the fairness or unfairness of the rent. Rents, I should say, are highest in Leinster,—next highest in Munster,—next in Ulster; and, with some exceptions, lowest in Connaught, where land is generally let, not by the acre, but in the lump: that, as the only object of this Query must be, to ascertain whether land be fairly or unfairly let, the best answer to it is, that, with few exceptions, the landholders of Ireland cannot pay the rents which are exacted, unless by limiting their diet and their comforts within the bounds prescribed by the absolute necessities of nature; and that notwithstanding their

privations, a large proportion are in arrear. This, I think, sufficiently answers the query.

The fifth query asks, "Are the landed proprietors absentee or resident?" To this query another ought to have been added,—Are the *agents* of absentee landlords resident or absentee? And in the instructions delivered to the assistant-commissioners, they are directed to inquire, and of course to report, as to the effects of residence and non-residence.

It must not be imagined, that the people on all absentee estates are in a worse condition than they are upon those estates where there is a resident landlord. The condition of the peasantry depends *on the circumstances under which the lands are occupied*, much more than upon the residence of proprietors; and I cannot say that it is generally an easy matter to guess, from the condition of the peasantry on an estate, whether the landlord be absentee or resident. Some of the most comfortable tenantry in Ireland are found on absentee properties; and some of the most miserable, on estates upon which the proprietor resides: there is no doubt, however, that where a well-disposed and *unembarrassed* landlord resides, fewer unemployed labourers are found, the condition of the labourer is better, and the retail trade of the most adjacent town is materially benefited.

The next two queries inquire as to the number of labourers in constant employment, and the number in occasional employment; and also ask how they are maintained when out of employment?

In reply to these queries, I will take upon me to answer, that the great mass of the labouring class in Ireland have no constant employment. I should say, that throughout the greater part of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, a large majority of the labouring poor are unable to find constant employment. With the exception of Belfast, and in some few places where public works had created a temporary demand, I found nowhere full employment for the people. As for their means of subsistence, when out of employment, little suffices. If they have not, themselves, a patch of potato

land, they or their wives beg among the farmers round the country;—relations, who have a little to spare, help them;—and the priest also does something for them.

“What is the ordinary diet, and condition with respect to clothing, of the labouring classes?” is the next query.

The diet of those who are in employment consists of a scanty meal or two of potatoes, with the addition, at times, of a little butter-milk. The diet of the far greater number, who are not in employment, consists of as many dry potatoes as serve just to sustain life. In Ulster, things are rather better; there are fewer of the latter class; and the former have more plentiful meals. As for clothing, — an English beggar would not lift off the ground the clothes worn by old and young of the lower classes of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. The young can scarcely be said to be clothed at all.

“What,” continue the queries, “are the daily wages of labourers, with or without diet?”

Excluding the large towns, such as Belfast, Cork, and Limerick, and the labourers employed on the domains of a very few resident noblemen, ten-pence, without diet, is the highest wages ever given for constant employment: nine-pence, and eight-pence, is the more usual rate: and in some places, sixpence is willingly accepted, for constant employment. With diet, sixpence is the usual sum given. The wages of occasional employment vary with the occasion: at seasons of particular demand, one shilling, or more even, may be given; but at all other times, any number of labourers may be hired, by the week, at eight-pence, and even lower. In the instructions delivered to the assistant-commissioners, they are desired to inquire whether higher wages are attended by a corresponding increase of comfort? I unhesitatingly reply, that they are! The whole province of Ulster bears me out in this assertion.

The next query inquires, whether women and children are employed in labour?

The labour of women and children is scarcely wanted, where

half the male population are unemployed. Women employed in agricultural labour are generally some part of the family of the landholder.

"What, in the whole," says the next query, "might an *average* labourer, obtaining an *average* amount of employment both in day work and task work, earn in the year, including harvest work, and the value of all his other advantages and means of living?"

In reply to this important query, I would say, that in the country, where not one half of the people are in constant employment, it would be unfair to state "the *average* amount of employment" obtained by a labourer, throughout the year, to be more than for one-half of the year: during that half-year, his wages cannot be fairly stated at more than 8*d.* for four months; and for the other two months,—seed and harvest times, 1*s.*—The hundred and four working days, at 8*d.*, are 3*l.* 9*s.* 4*d.*; and the fifty-two days, at 1*s.*, added to this, make 6*l.* 1*s.* 4*d.*; which is all the labourer "obtaining an *average* amount of employment" may earn in a year; and this sum divided by 365—the number of days which the labourer has to support himself and his family—gives him, per day, not quite FOUR-PENCE! I am quite confident, that if the whole yearly earnings of the labourers of Ireland were divided by the whole number of labourers, the result would be under this sum,—FOUR-PENCE a day for the labourers of Ireland!

But in order that the force of this conclusion may be fully perceived, I must mention the two queries which follow. The first of them inquires, how much the labourer's wife, and four children, all of an age to work (the eldest not more than sixteen), might earn within the year? And the second query inquires, what would be the expense of food for an able-bodied labourer on an average of years?

Now the first of these is a foolish query, and no way alters the conclusion I came to, in answering the former query; for it is obvious that, even supposing employment to be attainable by the wife and children—a thing not at all probable

where the husband has only half employment—the average condition of the labourer would not be bettered. Early marriages and a numerous progeny are universal. If the labourer has four children able to work, the probability is, that he has at least four younger children to support: the *occasional* labour, and *scanty* remuneration paid for the labour of a child, will certainly not do more than suffice for its own support *throughout the year*; and when we consider the general dearth of employment, and the large families of the Irish peasants, we may fairly conclude, that the labourer has to support his wife and two children by his own labour,—which we have seen averages 4*d.* per day.

With respect to the yearly expense of food,—two stone and a half of potatoes, no more than suffice for the daily support of a labourer, his wife, and two children; and taking the average price of potatoes at 2*d.* per stone—a very low average—mere subsistence cannot be purchased with the whole amount of wages, supposing the whole amount available for subsistence: but rent has to be paid. Formerly the pig was sufficient for this; but the market has so fallen, that something is wanted, besides the pig, to make up the rent. Where no land is attached to the cabin,—the average rent of it being 35*s.*—at least 20*s.* of this sum must be made up from wages: so that the 4*d.* per day suffers a diminution of nearly three farthings. Where a little potato land is attached to the cabin, the value of the potatoes may be considered an equivalent for the amount of the rent.

It is next inquired—“Of what class of persons, generally, are the landlords of cottages and cabins?”

In the country, the landlords of cabins are, generally, small farmers, who are quite as hard set, to make up their own rent, as their humbler dependents are to pay theirs. In the suburbs of the towns, great landowners, and often noble lords, are the landlords.

The next query inquires the rent of cabins?

In Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary counties, 30*s.* and 40*s.* is the usual rent of a cabin, either

altogether without land, or with so inconsiderable a patch, that its value is scarcely any set-off against the rent. In the more western and more northern parts of Ireland, with the same rent, a little potato land generally accompanies the cabin, excepting in the suburbs of the towns.

“Of what description of buildings are those cabins, and how furnished?”

This is the next query; and those who have read this volume, will not require to read the answer to it. My object however is, as I have already said, to condense in this chapter the information scattered through the volume. The only difference between the best and the worst of the mud cabins is, that some are water-tight and some are not: air-tight I saw none; with windows, scarcely any; with chimneys,—that is, with a hole in the roof, for the smoke to escape through,—as many, perhaps, with it, as without it. As for furniture, there is no such thing—unless a broken stool or two, and an iron pot, can be called furniture. I should say, that in the greater part of Leinster and Munster, and in the flat districts of Connaught, bedsteads are far from general; and bed clothing is never sufficient. In the greater part of Ulster, cabins, and their furniture, are considerably superior.

The next query inquires, upon what conditions labourers or cottiers hold their cabins and land; and whether it is usual to require labour in addition to, or in lieu of rent?

Where labourers or cottiers hold their cabin and patch of ground of a farmer, the rent is generally covenanted to be paid in labour. Eighty days' labour is very usually required, as the rent of a cabin and small patch of land.

The next query refers to the con-acre system; and inquires as to its prevalence; and as to the highest and the lowest rent paid for con-acre?

In every part of Ireland, with the exception of Ulster, where land is not the only refuge of the poor man, con-acre prevails to a greater or less extent,—to the greatest extent, in those parts which are the most populous. Rent of con-acre varies from 7*l.* up to 12*l.* I have heard of higher rents,

but these were rare exceptions. Ten pounds may be stated as the usual rent ; and with a favourable season, this rent can be afforded. The reader will not have forgotten another practice, to which in a preceding part I have alluded,—that which gives to the cottier the produce for one year, rent free, of as much land as he is able sufficiently to manure. In reply to the query, whether the con-acre crop be on the average a remunerating crop?—I should answer, that with average seasons, and at the average rent, *it is* a remunerating crop.

The next two queries inquire as to the number of labourers who leave their dwellings periodically, to obtain employment elsewhere ; and what proportion go to England ; and whether they be married men ; and how their wives and children are supported in their absence ?

A precise answer to this query is impossible. From the west and north-west,—chiefly from the lower parts of Connaught,—multitudes go in search of employment ; but the number of those who go to England is diminishing ; while the number of those who seek employment in Leinster, is augmenting with the constantly increasing tillage in Ireland. By far the greater number of the labourers so leaving their homes are married men ; and in that part of Ireland from which this migration chiefly takes place, cabins have generally a bit of potato land attached to them, on the produce of which, or of a patch held by con-acre, the wife and children subsist. In Mayo, from the lower part of which many labourers migrate in the season, the wives of the cottiers earn a trifle by the spinning of flax.

The next query requests information as to the number of public-houses, and the prevalence of illicit distillation ?

The number of public-houses appears to a stranger out of all proportion with the extent and population of the district where they are found. This is owing to the faults of the licensing system, by which the expense of the license is regulated by the sum at which the house demanding it is rated ; and thus the trade is thrown into the worst hands. Illicit

distillation prevails universally, and will continue to prevail, until the duty on legalized whiskey be so reduced, that the difference in price between it and the illicit whiskey will be no compensation for the risk of distilling the latter.

The next query inquires, as to the number of the aged and infirm, and how they are supported ?

The number of these is greatest in the towns : the ejected poor seek a livelihood in the towns, and gradually become diseased by privations. Those aged and infirm who are found in the country are supported, chiefly by their nearest relatives ; by the charity of the neighbouring farmers ; and by little helps from the clergy of both persuasions.

“ What number of persons,” says the next query, “ subsist by begging ? and are alms usually given in provisions or money ? ”

Few beg in the country, except the wives and children of the infirm, of the diseased, and of the unemployed labourer ; or widows, or frail old men. Money is seldom given : a few potatoes, or a handful or two of meal, are the usual aids. To the last query, another ought to have been added, inquiring what description of persons are the usual givers of alms ? Much more the farmers, than the landlords ; much more those who cannot, than those who can, afford the offering. Good resident landlords give ; but these are rare : and the beggar finds readier access to the farm-house than to the hall,—and, I fear, a better reception.

Passing over one or two queries of little importance, I come to one which inquires, whether any persons are known to have died of actual starvation ?

If by starvation be meant, death quickly and immediately, resulting from a total want of food ; I should say that, in the country, this rarely happens. The Irish poor are remarkably kindly affectioned towards each other ; and a relation, or even a neighbour, will divide his potato with one who is in want. But if the word starvation be meant to comprehend those cases, in which insufficient subsistence induces disease, pre-disposes the individual to the attack of epidemics, or accele-

rates the decay of nature ; then I have good reason to believe, that by far the greater number of the Irish poor die of starvation. In making this statement, however, I include town as well as country ; but I shall afterwards return to this query, with reference to towns.

The next important query I come to, is this—" To what extent has the system of throwing small farms into large ones taken place ; and what has become of the dispossessed tenants ?"

There is a growing disposition on the part of landlords to get rid of middle-men, on whose estates, holdings are generally much subdivided ; and consequently, when the middle-man's lease lapses, small farms are thrown into larger farms, and tenants are necessarily dispossessed. The great landowners who have adopted this rule give the dispossessed tenants holdings at a very small, almost a nominal rent, on mountain land ; out of which, however, industry may obtain a livelihood ; or, in some instances, they offer to pay the expense of the emigration of the dispossessed tenants : but in all cases in which the landlord has not the power or the will so to act, the tenants are turned adrift penniless and shelterless, and either locate themselves on some neighbouring estate, or swell the pauper population of the nearest town. Consolidation, unless where the landlord has it in his power to provide otherwise for his dispossessed tenantry, is unjust towards the country at large, upon whose charities they are thrown ;—cruel towards those who are dispossessed ; and impolitic as regards the state. This reply answers in part the query which follows, respecting the prevalence of middle-men. The number of those middle-men who hold their land on terminable lease is fast diminishing ; and with the exception of those middle-men who are extensive landholders, or those holding on lease for ever,—who are often better men than the head landlord,—the tenants holding under middle-men are generally in a greatly worse condition than those holding directly under a head landlord.

The next query refers to emigration ;—and in reply to it, I

would assert, that the disposition to emigrate increases ; that all of the lower classes who are able to avail themselves of it, do avail themselves of it ; that the persons who emigrate are chiefly agriculturists, cottiers, and small farmers, and Protestants and Catholics indifferently, but chiefly Catholics ; and that Canada is their most favourite land of promise.

The last query, which refers to the rural districts, is a most important one. " Is the general condition of the poorer classes improved, deteriorated, or stationary, since the peace in the year 1815 ; and in what respects ?" It would have been better if this query had been more comprehensive, and had included in it the condition of the whole agricultural classes.

I regret to say, that with scarcely an exception—unless those offered by some of the large towns, which have become great points of export,—I am compelled to say, that the agricultural population, farmer and labourer, but particularly the farmer, has deteriorated greatly within the last fifteen years. Rents have generally continued the same ; produce has fallen ; and farmers have been getting poorer and poorer. As for the agricultural labourers,—a body whose wages do not average four-pence per day, and who live on the verge of starvation,—it is needless to ask if any improvement has taken place ; none certainly in food, either in quantity or quality ; nor generally, any in lodging ; but I believe I am justified in saying, that some little improvement is visible in female clothing, owing to the low price of cottons.

I have now gone through the queries applicable to the rural districts ; and shall next proceed, very briefly, to go over the queries applicable to town parishes only.

Several of the first queries refer to the increase of towns in size and population ; and to these queries, it may be answered, that almost all the sea-ports, and all towns commanding a navigation, are advancing in size and population rapidly ; and that even the towns deficient in those advantages are not in general retrograding. Belfast, Limerick, Waterford, Wexford, Tralee, Sligo, Londonderry, Newry, Clonmell, Athlone, Galway, Ballina,—and even the more inland towns of Ennis-

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killen, Armagh, Thurles, and Tipperary,—are im,
Cork and Youghal are not retrograding; and exc
Kilkenny, Cashel, and Bandon, and some of the smaller to.
I know of none that are receding.

The next query inquires respecting the establishment of manufactures?

No manufactures have sprung up in any town in Ireland, excepting Belfast. Unless in the province of Ulster, the linen trade is extinct; and no other manufacture has taken its place. There are scarcely any manufactures in Leinster, Munster, and Connaught.

The next three queries inquire, what are the occupations of the labouring classes: and whether women and children find employment?

The chief employment of the labouring classes in the sea-ports of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, is that afforded by the export trade. To this, in Ulster, manufacture is added. Women, excepting in the linen trade districts, find no remunerating employment.

To the query which asks, "What are the earnings of a labourer and his family in the towns?" I would answer, that in the principal towns,—Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Clonmell, Londonderry, &c.—the able-bodied labourer has full employment nine months in the year, on an average, and at wages which average 6s. per week. The average, therefore, would be 4s. 6d. per week for the twelve months. The rate is not the same, nor employment the same, in all the large towns: in Waterford, there is little more than half employment; while in Belfast there is almost full employment. In the latter town, too, wages are from 7s. to 8s. per week; in Waterford, not more than 5s. Excepting in the manufacturing districts of Ulster, the earnings of women and children can scarcely be reckoned.

The next query inquires, "What is the food of the working classes in the towns?" It differs little from the food of the working classes in the country. More money is spent in the towns in whiskey-drinking; and the only difference in food

ANSWERS TO THE QUERIES

errings, and pork offal, form a part of the diet of the classes in towns.

is next asked, "whether any alteration has taken place in the food, lodging, and habitations of these classes in large towns? whether any new source of employment has been opened up to the labouring classes? and whether any change, beneficial or otherwise, has taken place?"

I believe I am justified in replying, that the condition of the labouring and working classes in the large sea-ports has somewhat improved. I should say this of Limerick, Waterford, Cork, Tralee, Clonmell, Sligo, and some other towns. The new source of employment that has been opened up to the labouring classes is that arising from the increasing export trade in corn, bacon, provision, and butter; which, although it leaves but a scanty profit to the merchant, is a source of considerable employment to the labouring classes.

The same queries are next asked with respect to the large towns, which I have already answered respecting the country,—viz. the number of the aged and infirm who cannot work, and how they are supported? the number of widows and children who have no natural protectors, and how they are supported; and whether any persons are known to have died of actual destitution?

In all the large towns, the number of helpless and diseased paupers, and of aged and infirm women, and destitute children, is fearfully great. They are supported by voluntary alms,—by mendicancy,—and by public societies; but they are supported just on the verge of starvation: and it is the opinion of the medical men of Limerick, Waterford, and other large towns, that at least seventy-five per cent. of the infirm poor die through destitution,—either by the gradual wasting of nature, or by the ravages of epidemics, to which destitution renders them liable. It is a fact worth adding, that the charitable institutions in the large towns are supported not by the wealthiest persons, or those possessing the chief property in the towns, but by the middle classes.

"How," it is next asked, "are the lodging-houses which

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are chiefly frequented by the poor usually provide beds and bedding; and in what condition are they ventilation and general repair?"

The houses of the infirm poor of the towns are a thousand times more wretched than the worst cabins of Munster and Leinster. The latter have the air around and the sky above them: the former are hovels, cellars, mere dark dens,—damp, filthy, stagnant, unwholesome places, into which we should not in England put any domestic animal: and as for the inquiry, "how they are usually provided with beds and bedding;" they are not provided with either: a little straw in a corner is the usual substitute for bed and bedstead,—and a ragged mat, the bed-cloaths. On this head, I beg to refer the reader to my notices of Limerick, particularly at page 173.

An inquiry next follows, as to the number of pawnbrokers' shops, and the classes of persons with whom their dealings are principally carried on?

Pawnbrokers' shops are exceedingly numerous in all the towns; and by the common practice of pawning articles on Monday morning, and redeeming them on Saturday night, the interest on one shilling lent and received every week throughout the year, with the expense of the duplicate, amounts to 8s. 8d. per annum. The classes who deal with the pawnbrokers, are not merely the lowest classes,—labourers and artizans,—but the small farmers also.

Besides these queries, I mentioned that I had also before me the instructions delivered to the assistant-commissioners. In these instructions, I find some things mentioned which are not included in the foregoing queries. Some of the most important I shall name, and annex an answer to them.

The commissioners are required to ascertain if the education of children has tended to improve the moral habits of the parents?—The result of my inquiry is, that it has had this effect.

The commissioners are requested to inquire, what circulating or mechanics' libraries are in the towns?

ANSWERS TO THE QUERIES

ing in Ulster, there are no mechanics' libraries,—nor circulating libraries,—unless in Limerick, Cork, Waterford, Clonmell, and Enniskillen.

The assistant-commissioner is directed to inquire into the existence and effects of loan funds?

I have, in the course of these volumes, several times mentioned the existence of loan societies; and I am warranted in saying, that they have exerted a most beneficial influence on the districts where they have been established.

The assistant-commissioner is directed to inquire into the effects produced by the use of ardent spirit?

It is the opinion of all who are best qualified to judge, that much disease, both mental and bodily, originates in the immoderate use of whiskey.

On the subject of early marriages, the assistant-commissioners are directed to report; and to inquire whether any provision, in money or furniture, is made against marriage?

Among the lowest classes, marriages are universally early; and so far from any provision being made against marriage, it is no unusual thing to borrow money in order to pay the marriage fee.

The assistant-commissioners are directed to inquire, whether, in districts where much misery prevails, the chief burden of relieving the needy is born by the occupiers of the soil or by the proprietors of it?

I think I have already sufficiently answered this inquiry. A very large proportion of the burden is borne by the land occupiers of Ireland.

Inquiry is also directed to be made whether those who have been dispossessed, and who have taken shelter on bog or mountain, have cultivated the waste on which they have settled?

Those who have been located on mountain land belonging to the landlord by whom they have been dispossessed, and who hold their possession at a low rent, generally proceed diligently in the cultivation of their possession. Those who have merely "taken shelter," and who have no security for their possession, have done little towards improving it.

The assistant-commissioners are desired to ascertain the cause of the excessive litigation which prevails in Ireland ?

The chief causes I take to be—poverty; an inherent defect of character; and competition for land:—poverty, which disables men from fulfilling their engagements; a defect of character, which renders them indifferent to the propriety of fulfilling them; and competition for land, which renders the possession of every rood a matter involving life and death.

The chief causes of assault, which the commissioners are also directed to ascertain, I conceive to arise from disputed possession; disputed boundary; trespass of cattle; distraining for rent; and grudge against successful bidders in the land market: all which may, in like manner, be resolved into competition for land, and poverty—or want of employment, which is the cause of both.

Inquiry is directed to be made into the efficiency of mendicity societies, as a provision for the poor.

They afford no adequate provision for the poor; none whatever for the infirm and bedridden; and they are not supported in any degree by the individuals who contribute to swell the pauper list, nor by those within the towns, who can best afford to relieve the needy. I conceive too, that the virulence of epidemics is greatly increased by the manner in which the poor on the list of the Mendicity Society are fed. The Mendicity cart, which goes through the town, is filled with offals of the most heterogeneous kind,—fish, meat, bones, soup, and vegetables of all sorts—and much that composes this mess is sour, and unfit for human food.

I shall mention only one other instruction. The commissioner is directed to inquire into the effect produced on the state of the labouring class by any temporary increase of wages and employment arising from a public work; whether it tends to increase the price of labour, by drawing labour from distant places; and what is found to be the effect produced on the labourers of the place where the work has been carried on ?

I have always found less complaint and less destitution

among the lower classes, in a place where a public work is actually carried on—be it of what description it may be. It does not generally attract much labour from a distance, or materially raise the price of labour: it only employs the unemployed at the usual rate. The state of the labouring classes, when the work is completed, depends upon the nature of the work. If it be a work not tending to the production of capital—such as a gaol, or a barrack,—then the condition of the labourers is the same when it is finished as before it began; but if the public works were of a nature calculated to promote either agricultural or commercial activity—such as roads, canals, docks, &c.,—then, I conceive, the improved condition of the labouring classes would be progressive.

Upon the foregoing facts, I beg humbly to submit, to all who incline to read it, the following brief

REPORT.

I, Henry David Inglis, acting under no superior orders; holding no government commission; with no end to serve, and no party to please; hoping for no patronage, and fearing no censure; and with no view, other than the establishment of truth; having just completed a journey throughout Ireland, and having minutely examined, and inquired into, the condition of the people of that country, do humbly REPORT,—that the destitute, infirm, and aged, form a large body of the population of the cities, towns, and villages of Ireland: that, in the judgment of those best qualified to know the truth, three-fourth parts of their number die through the effects of destitution, either by the decay of nature, accelerated, or through disease, induced by scanty and unwholesome food,—or else by the attack of epidemics, rendered more fatal from the same causes. That the present condition of this large class is shocking for humanity to contemplate, and beyond the efforts of private beneficence to relieve; and is a reproach

to any civilized and Christian country. That the individuals whose charity prolongs for a little the existence of these miserable objects of their compassion, are not the individuals throughout the country whose improvidence, harshness, sordidness, and neglect, have contributed to swell the mass of pauperism,—nor those who possess the chief property in the towns,—nor those who are the best able to help the indigent : and that, in these circumstances, it becomes an imperative and a sacred duty,—alike urgent by the demands of humanity and the requirements of religion,—to provide, by legislative enactment, for the support, on equitable principles, of the aged, impotent, and infirm poor of Ireland.

That the condition of the agricultural labourers throughout Ireland is scarcely less deplorable than that of the class to which I have just alluded. That the supply of labour incalculably exceeds the demand for it : that but a very small portion of this class are able to find constant employment : that a large proportion are employed during one half of the whole year : that the wages of labour, even to those who are fully employed, do not afford the means of healthy subsistence : that almost the whole of this class live on the very verge of starvation ; and that thereby, hourly additions are made to the ranks of impotent pauperism : that neither the power nor the will of private individuals to give employment is able in any degree to arrest this progress, or change this condition : that an unemployed population is dangerous to the peace of a state ; and that the power of restless or wicked men to inflame the passions of the people, is derived solely from the condition in which that people are placed : that the disorders of Ireland are not owing to popery, since in those districts where the people find employment, Catholic and Protestant are alike comfortable ; while in those where the people are unemployed, Protestant and Catholic are alike miserable : that the disorders of Ireland are not in any great degree the result of absenteeism ; since, with few exceptions, it is impossible to guess, by the condition of the peasantry, whether the landlord be resident or absent : that absenteeism, in

so far as it is an evil, is but a result of more important causes of evil: that the real, and only true source of the disorders of Ireland, is want of employment; for although the disturbed state of the country acts injuriously upon the investment of capital, and upon residence, this is itself but a result of want of employment for the people; and although the rack-rents of Ireland produce incalculable misery, these originate also in want of employment,—the only cause of that competition for land, which places the power of oppression in the hands of its owners. That millions of acres in Ireland are reclaimable by the agency of those very materials in which Ireland the most abounds—human labour, and limestone;—that since such is the condition of the labouring classes of Ireland, and such the means of improving that condition, it is the duty of government to encourage the cultivation of waste lands, and the improvement of husbandry, by such extensive public works as will facilitate this end, and as will in the meanwhile give employment to the people; and that in the event of the landowners of Ireland neglecting or delaying to take advantage of these facilities, by reason of want of enterprise or want of capital, it will then become the duty of the state to take upon itself the right of operating upon the reclaimable wastes of Ireland—fair compensation being given—and to colonise these wastes, for the benefit of the people.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Journey to Dublin—Trinity College—Visit to Maynooth College—Course of Study pursued at Maynooth—Occupations of the Students, and Mode of Life—Backslidings and Admissions—The Priest of Maynooth, and the Priest of the Olden Time—The present Priesthood, and present Spirit of Catholicism in Ireland—Expenses of Maynooth—The Parliamentary Grant—Carton, the Seat of the Duke of Leinster—A parting word to the Reader.

OF my Journey to Dublin, I have but slender notices for the reader. I already mentioned, that indisposition compelled me to pass rapidly over the ground; and I have the less to regret in this, since the towns and country on this great coast road to Dublin are so much better known than every other part of Ireland. I did not, however, shut my eyes by the way; and shall not, therefore, at once transport the reader to Dublin.

Scarcely has the traveller crossed the bridge of Newry, when he finds himself among a different people; and he will not have journeyed many miles from the boundary line of the province of Ulster, before he recognizes the genuine Irish cabin by the way side, and perceives that he has left behind him all the characteristics of the north. Dundalk is a short interruption to the spectacle of poverty, which all through the county of Louth stares one in the face. It is a respectable looking town, and probably owes its advantage to the character of the great neighbouring proprietor—Lord Roden.

The only other town of any consequence, between Newry and Dublin, is Drogheda, which, in its interior, is a handsome town, containing good streets and excellent houses; but which owns as miserable a suburb as any town in Ireland. Rows

of the most wretched mud cabins extend at least a mile from the town; and in the filth which surrounds them, and in the ragged appearance of the inmates, exhibit as many proofs of wretched condition, as are to be found in almost any town of Leinster, Munster, or Connaught. Drogheda contains about 18,000 inhabitants; a very small number of whom are Protestants. I reached Dublin on the evening of the same day on which I left Newry, after a journey through Ireland, somewhat exceeding two thousand miles, and having visited, and for the most part traversed, every county, with three exceptions.

Descriptions of public buildings do not fall in with my plan; and indeed this is not an art in which I am skilful. The public buildings of Dublin are celebrated for their architectural beauty; and the Bank of Ireland, the Custom-house, the Four Courts, and Trinity College, are each deserving of a separate notice. The last, however, is the only one of the four, to which I made more visits than one. This great seminary of learning, the worthy rival of the English universities, and in usefulness and liberality far surpassing them, is an object of just pride to the Irish nation. But Trinity College is not perfect, any more than the universities of the sister kingdom; and like other venerable, and venerated institutions, is susceptible of amendment. There ought to be no pluralities, and no sinecures. The acceptance of a professorship ought to vacate a fellowship; and the duties of all professorships ought to be rigidly exacted. In some minor matters, too, changes might be beneficial. Scholarships, which are now given exclusively to classical knowledge, ought to be also opened to science; and fellowships ought not to be, as they now virtually are, the reward of science solely.

There are one or two important differences between Dublin College and the English Universities, which must not be passed over in silence. The most important of these, is that Dublin College receives within its walls dissenters of every denomination, and refuses to them no collegiate honours or degrees, except such as are by statute connected with the

ecclesiastical discipline of the university. This liberality has been attended with the best effects; the friendships formed at College, have, in countless instances, softened the asperities of the mixed political and religious controversies by which Ireland is agitated; and has preserved a link of social connexion, when all other bonds were broken. Another essential difference is, that the study of the modern languages forms a part of the system of education in Trinity College. Very recently, prizes have been established for proficiency in the French, German, and Italian languages. The stranger, when he finds Roman Catholics freely admitted to the Dublin University, cannot but feel surprised at the folly that established the College of Maynooth, instead of superadding a faculty of Catholic theology to Trinity College: it is not yet too late, however, to remedy the blunder.

I visited Maynooth, before I left Dublin, in spring; and when I returned to the capital, in the latter end of the autumn, I repeated my visit to the college.

The road from Dublin to Maynooth is an extremely interesting one; but there are two roads; I speak, however, of the low road, which skirts the left bank of the Liffey. All the way to Leixlip, the softest and richest scenery lies along both banks of the river, which glides, a clear and rapid stream, even at a very short distance from the metropolis. Here are the strawberry banks, and here, the tea-drinking cottages, that attract the citizens of Dublin during the strawberry season; and I know few cities, whose environs offer greater inducements for recreation, than the Irish capital. The people of Dublin, however, are a pleasure-seeking people; and need few inducements to force them from the desk and the counter. The situation of Leixlip is very attractive: and I venture to predict that whoever halts to breakfast at Mrs. Collings' inn, a quarter of a mile beyond Leixlip, will certainly order dinner to await his return, unless he has predetermined to accept the hospitalities of the college.

The town of Maynooth has nothing to recommend it; and it is only remarkable, as being the site of the celebrated

Catholic college; which was, of course, the object of my visit. The college is an extensive building, and presents a rather imposing front; and is separated from the town by a large open area railed off, and kept in excellent order. Provided with a satisfactory letter to the then vice-president of the college, Mr. Montague, I, of course, found a courteous reception; and much apparent willingness to communicate every information. When I visited Maynooth, the number of students somewhat exceeded four hundred. They are admitted at an early age; and when first received into the college, must possess some knowledge of Latin. The course of study at Maynooth is arduous, and, as laid down in the report of the commissioners on education, very extensive. I was shown this report, in answer to my interrogatories as to the course of education: and I confess, I was greatly surprised to find it so varied and so liberal. But upon a little farther questioning, I learned that this course is not adhered to; and that only as much of it is followed, *as can be accomplished*;—these were the words used,—from which I infer, that the course of instruction is entirely optional with, and varies at the pleasure of, the heads of the college; and that whoever forms any opinion of the course of education pursued at Maynooth, from what he has read in the report of the education commissioners, will fall into grievous error.

I will now present the detail, as furnished to me, of the manner in which the students spend their time. During the six months which follow Easter, the students rise at five o'clock: and during the remaining six months, at six. The first hour after rising, is allotted to morning prayer and meditation. Then follow two hours of study; and to these, mass succeeds. One hour is then allowed for breakfast, and recreation; about one half of which, or less, is occupied with breakfast. One hour's study follows this; and then, a lecture, or class, as it is called, which occupies another hour: half an hour's recreation is then permitted: two hours of study follow: and then one hour's lecture. It is now three o'clock, which is the hour of dinner; and two hours are allowed for dinner

and recreation,—and on Wednesdays and Saturdays, three hours. From five o'clock, to a quarter before seven, is allotted to study; and then follows a quarter of an hour of recreation; from seven till eight, is occupied with a lecture; and supper then succeeds; for which, and recreation, an hour is allowed. Prayers and meditation, occupy the hour from nine to ten: and at ten, all retire to bed. At that hour, an individual goes round the college, and visits every dormitory: *Benedicamus Domine*, he says, and all must then be quiet. No conversation is allowed during breakfast and dinner. Some individual is appointed to read aloud; sometimes it is history that is read; sometimes the lives of saints; but I have reason to think that the latter is the usual kind of reading. From the moment of meeting at supper, until meeting again at breakfast, there is total silence; in order, as I was told, that meditation might have its due effect. By study is meant preparation for lectures; and students may either study in their own rooms, or in the library; but they are not permitted, as at Carlow, to study in the open air. In the library, which I visited, all the books are open, and there is, apparently, free access to them; the books are chiefly—theology, sacred biography, philosophy, history, and some few travels. I glanced over the shelves with some attention, and saw no work improper, by its levity or character, for the perusal of a minister of religion; and yet I was informed, that a strict watch is kept on the studies of the students; and *that it is soon discovered if their studies be improper!!* Now what is the inference to be necessarily drawn from this admission? what are the studies that require so much watching? what are considered the improper studies?—no fictions are there; nor profane poetry; nor the lucubrations of freethinkers. I saw only the standard histories, and most unexceptionable works of Christian philosophers; from which, then, it necessarily follows, that history, philosophy, and discovery,—that all books not strictly theological,—all, in short, by which the mind can be informed and enlarged, are considered to be "*improper studies.*" As respects the precise nature of the studies and lectures, I

could obtain no accurate information. I have already said, that in answer to my inquiry, I was shown the printed course contained in the commissioners' report; but that this imposing enumeration of studies was afterwards admitted to be an enumeration, and nothing more; and coupling this with the kind of reading alone permitted in the library,—amounting nearly to a prohibition of all but theological studies,—we are, perhaps, entitled to conclude, that the lectures are also, almost exclusively, directed towards the maintenance of the Roman Catholic faith. To the graver inquiries respecting Maynooth, I shall again return; but I have something yet to add, respecting the habits and occupations of the students.

The table appears to be plentifully and wholesomely supplied to the students. Breakfast consists of cocoa, with bread, but no butter. For dinner, meat is allowed every day but Friday; and cocoa again forms the supper. Too great sameness in diet is decidedly injurious; the body, in order to preserve its health, requires variety, as well as the mind. On the meagre days, eggs, bread and butter, pie or pudding, constitute the fare.

The students are allowed, if they desire it, two months leave of absence during the summer. I inquired if it ever, or often happened, that youths changed their views—acquiring during their absence a relish for the world,—or, perhaps, becoming disinclined for a life of celibacy? and it was candidly enough admitted that this happened every summer; and that during the present year's vacation, five or six had withdrawn from the noviciate. The reason usually given for this step by such individuals is, that they find "Providence has not destined them for the life." I was also told that, when the college was first instituted, backsliding was of very frequent occurrence; and the reason for this, assigned by my informant was, that there were then a greater number of individuals candidates for the priesthood, who had, in a worldly sense, better prospects. The reason assigned, is no doubt a very correct one. The Catholic students of Maynooth, now, with a few exceptions, belonging to the lower classes of Catho-

lic landholders, have been accustomed to regard the parish priest as a being almost of another nature, and with no prospect of independence as a cultivator of the land, he has nothing to tempt him from the course which he knows will place him in a higher sphere than all around him ; and perhaps even transfer to himself the respect which he, and all his parish, had been accustomed to pay to another.

I made free to repeat to the vice-president, an opinion I had very often heard expressed ; and, indeed, I may say, very generally held, among the Protestants of Ireland,—that since the institution of Maynooth, the Catholic priesthood had deteriorated ; and that a priest educated at Maynooth might be at once distinguished from the priest of former days, by his less amenity of manners, and less liberal sentiments,—the result of a more exclusive, more severe, and more contracted system of education pursued at Maynooth. I need scarcely say, that these were not admitted to be facts ; and as I could at that time speak only from hearsay, I was, fairly enough, requested to judge for myself, in the course of the journey which I was about to make. But my assertion, or rather, my repetition of the assertions of others, was also met by some counter-statements. I was told that France and Spain were not, in past days, countries where liberal sentiments were likely to be imbibed ; I was told, that the opportunity of mixing with the world two months in every year, is a great advantage to the student of Maynooth ; and I was told also, that the education at Maynooth is greatly superior to that formerly acquired by the candidates for the priesthood, who travelled into foreign countries ; and who, not being able to pay the expenses of a thorough education, got themselves ordained, and supported themselves by saying masses.

It may be very true, that liberal sentiments of a certain description were not likely to be gathered on the Continent, thirty or forty years ago. But surely, that species of liberality, which may perhaps more properly be called charity ; and that knowledge of the world and mankind, which is requisite towards the understanding of one's self,—are, and

must always have been, more likely to be acquired by a residence in a foreign country,—by mixing with persons of all nations,—by the yielding of tastes and habits, consequent on a residence abroad—by the knowledge, imperceptibly gained, by merely keeping the eyes open in a foreign country—and even by the mere journeying to and fro,—than by returning from the seclusion of Maynooth two months in the year, to the farm-house, and remote parish, where the only change likely to be wrought in the embryo priest, is an increase of self-sufficiency. But I obeyed the request which was made to me; and in the journey which I subsequently took, I had ample opportunity of forming comparisons between the priest of the olden times, and the priest of Maynooth: and, with every disposition to deal fairly by both, I did return to Dublin with a perfect conviction of the justice of the opinion which I had heard expressed. I found the old foreign educated priest, a gentleman; a man of frank, easy deportment, and good general information; but by no means, in general, so good a Catholic, as his brother of Maynooth: *As*, I found, either, a coarse, vulgar-minded man, or a stiff, close, and very conceited man; but in every instance, Popish to the back-bone: learned, I dare say, in theology; but profoundly ignorant of all that liberalizes the mind: a hot zealot in religion; and fully impressed with, or professing to be impressed with, a sense of his consequence and influence. I need not surely say, that I found exceptions; that I found some, whom the monkish austerities, and narrow education of Maynooth, had left unscathed; and that I found very many,—I might say, the greater proportion,—who, notwithstanding the defects of education which clove to them, were charitable and heedful of the poor; and who grudged no privations in the exercise of their religious duties. This latter trait is indeed universal among the Popish priesthood; and it would be well, if the zeal of the Protestant clergy approached, even in a very remote degree, to that of their Catholic brethren.

I entertain no doubt, that the disorders which originate in hatred of Protestantism, have been increased by the Maynooth

education of the Catholic priesthood. It is the Maynooth priest, who is the agitating priest: and if the foreign educated priest chance to be a more liberal-minded man, less a zealot, and less a hater of Protestantism, than is consistent with the present spirit of Catholicism in Ireland,—straightway an assistant, red hot from Maynooth, is appointed to the parish; and in fact, the old priest is virtually displaced. In no country in Europe,—no, not even in Spain,—is the spirit of Popery so intensely anti-Protestant, as in Ireland. In no country is there more bigotry and superstition among the lower orders, or more blind obedience to the priesthood; in no country is there so much zeal and intolerance among the ministers of religion. I do believe, that at this moment Catholic Ireland is more ripe for the re-establishment of the inquisition, than any other country in Europe. But I have been led into a long digression, though I trust not an ill-timed one, and have yet some brief notices to add of Maynooth.

The nominal expenses of a student at Maynooth, are twenty guineas stipend for the first year, with eight guineas entrance-money. The stipend of twenty guineas pays for commons, lodging, and instruction: nominally, a payment of twenty guineas is required yearly: but in point of fact, these stipends are not exacted,—sometimes not at all; and very rarely a continuance of them beyond the first year, from the poorer students. This is, of course, optional with the heads of the college, who will certainly not permit the priesthood to lose a promising member, owing to the difficulty of paying the stipend. It is evident, however, that the expenses of an education at Maynooth, form no obstacle to the pretensions of the lower orders. An Irish land-holder, be he rack-rented ever so much, will contrive to scrape together 20*l.* or 30*l.*, in order that his son may be a priest: he will starve himself and his family to accomplish this: he will work late and early, and run in arrear with his landlord. This is the great object of ambition; and is accomplished at any sacrifice. The reader knows, that the revenues of this establishment arise from private donations, from legacies, and a large Parliamentary grant, the wisdom of which has been often

called in question. It is certain, however, that the withdrawal of the Parliamentary grant, would not lead to the destruction of the college. No one who knows anything of Catholicism in Ireland, and who sees in every town, magnificent Catholic chapels, newly erected, or in the course of erection, can suppose that funds would be wanting for the maintenance of Maynooth; and being then, as it would be, wholly dis severed from its connexion with the government, it is probable that the system of education pursued in it, would be even more objectionable than it now is.

Everything within the college is plain, excepting the chapel, which is ornamented, as Catholic chapels are everywhere else. The dormitories of the students are precisely the same as those in the convents abroad. Each has a small window, a table, a chair, a little bedstead, a mattress, and a crucifix. No fires are allowed in the students' apartments; but in the great hall, there are fires during the winter.

There is a large area for play-ground at Maynooth; but I did not see many taking advantage of it. The students did not, in general, look like individuals fond of play.

All strangers, I believe, are courteously received at Maynooth, and permitted to see the building: unless, however, the stranger be provided with such an introduction as gives him a right to be inquisitive—I will not say any impertinent—he will learn little. The information which I received, would certainly not have been tendered: I will not say it was given grudgingly; but it was sought for. I did not remain to dine with the professors, though much pressed to do so; for I wished to devote an hour or two to Carton, the seat of the Duke of Leinster; and I was, besides, engaged to dine, at a late hour, with a church dignitary at Dublin.

Carton, the principal seat of the Duke of Leinster, lies about a mile from Maynooth; and both in its extent and decorations, is worthy of being the residence of Ireland's only Duke. The park scenery is not striking, for the country is too level to afford much diversity: but it is of noble extent; and in the happy disposition of its wood,—both clumps and single trees,—is not surpassed by any park in Ireland.

Attention has also been paid to the effects of colour, in the grouping of the foliage—a thing not sufficiently attended to in general; and which, indeed, I never saw in perfection, excepting at the seat of Mr. Baron Anker, at Bokstad, near Christiania; there, the grouping of the trees has been made, with reference chiefly to their autumnal tints, which, however, is easier managed in Norway than in England or Ireland; because in Norway, the frosts which come early,—sometimes so early as August,—change in a single night the hue of the woods, while they are yet in the full livery of summer: whereas in our latitudes, the high winds of September strip the trees of their leaves before the frosts arrive; and when they do come, there is not the same breadth of foliage to be coloured, as in Norway. But to return to Carton. The beauty of the park is greatly increased, by a stream which traverses it, and to which art has given almost the attractions of river scenery. More than one architectural embellishment also adorns the park, and a prospect tower has been erected on the most elevated spot within the domain.

The exterior of the house is greatly inferior in architectural beauty to many I had seen in Ireland. One would say no more of it, than that it is a large handsome edifice. The interior deserves higher praise. Money and taste have done for it, all that this most powerful of unions can accomplish; and the lover of the arts will find many objects to arrest his attention, and many charming subjects for contemplation.

My second residence in Dublin was a short one. Heat, dust, cholera, and fashion, had long ago driven almost all my hospitable friends from the capital. Heat, dust, and cholera, were past; but fashion still forbade their presence in town; some were in England; many on the Continent; and a few rusticated in the country,—carrying with them, no doubt, the splendours and luxuries of their town houses, to county Wicklow, Kildare, or Meath,—to return to Dublin, as ignorant of the real condition of the people of Ireland, as though they and the people of Ireland were in no way connected with each other. My Dublin friends will excuse me. I would say the same to them, were they present. I entertain the

most grateful recollection of their kindness and overflowing hospitality; but I must not compliment them on their knowledge of Ireland. I have not forgotten the assertion,—uncontradicted, nay, supported, by twelve or fifteen members of the aristocracy, assembled round a table,—that every man in the counties Kilkenny and Tipperary could obtain employment, if he did not prefer being idle. The state of my health did not permit me to make a run into the aforesaid counties, just to remind my friends of what they had told me, and in my turn, to tell a little of what I myself knew.

I now take leave of the reader, with one word of explanation. I have not studied to make this an agreeable book, so much as a useful book. It has neither the romantic incident, which, *malgré moi*, diversifies my work on Spain, nor the scenic sketches which I have introduced into my books on the Tyrol, or on Norway. This is not because I could not find romance to amuse the reader with, or scenery to describe to him; it is, I trust, for a better reason. Irish legends, Irish novels, we have in abundance. Irish character, condition and manners, have been presented to us in the many agreeable forms of fiction; but it is not romance, or caricature, nor even the most beautiful union of truth and fiction, that we want. I could have diversified my pages with legends; and I could, perhaps, have made my readers oftentimes merry, by narrating the curious and witty eccentricities of Irish character. But why jest, when occupied with so grave a subject? why endeavour to amuse, when I desire to interest? why raise a smile, when I would rather induce meditation, and serious thought? God knows, there is little real cause for jocularities, in treating of the condition of a starving people. We have been amused by fiction long enough; I aspire, in these volumes, to be the narrator of truth.

THE END.

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